



HISTORY OF METHODIST MISSIONS
IN SIX VOLUMES

HISTORY OF METHODIST MISSIONS

PART ONE

EARLY AMERICAN METHODISM, 1769-1844
in Two Volumes

PART TWO

MISSIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, 1845-1939
in Two Volumes

PART THREE

MISSIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, SOUTH, 1845-1939, *and*
MISSIONS OF THE
METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH

PART FOUR

WORLD OUTREACH OF METHODIST MISSIONS *in*
EVANGELISM, EDUCATION, LITERATURE, COOPERATION, AND
MEDICAL SERVICE

HISTORY OF METHODIST MISSIONS

PART ONE

Early American Methodism
1769-1844

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME ONE

Missionary Motivation and Expansion

by

WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY

The Board of Missions and Church Extension
of The Methodist Church : New York, 1949

213514, OCT 10 1951

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METHODIST

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vol. 1



PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To
RALPH E. DIFFENDORFER

INSPIRING LEADER, ABLE ADMINISTRATOR, CHRISTIAN STATESMAN

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Preface

THIS VOLUME is the first of a series entitled the *History of Methodist Missions*, authorized by the Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church. The series is designed to present a comprehensive, detailed, and accurate history of American Methodism in its character as a Christian missionary movement. It will set forth the development of the movement from 1769, when John Wesley's first missionaries arrived on America's eastern shore, to the unification in 1939 of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church.

The *History of Methodist Missions* naturally divides into four parts: Part One, *Early American Methodism, 1769-1844*—the missionary motivation and extension of the Methodist Movement from 1769 to the division between the North and the South in 1844; Part Two, the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church from 1844 to 1939; Part Three, the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and of the Methodist Protestant Church, from 1844 to 1939; Part Four, the activities and influence of worldwide Methodist missions in evangelism, education, literature, medical service, social reform, national life and government, changing Church polity, and the development of the ecumenical Church.

Part One of the series, *Early American Methodism, 1769-1844*—a distinct unit, complete in itself—is in two volumes: Volume One, *Missionary Motivation and Expansion*, and Volume Two, *To Reform the Nation*.

Within the period of early American Methodism it is quite impossible to draw a sharp line of differentiation between the general history of the Church and its missionary activities. The Methodist Movement as a whole was missionary in conception, in motivation, and in method. To attempt to screen out from the totality of activities of the founding fathers, and the three generations of their successors during the three-quarters of a century, 1769-1844, a portion to be labelled missionary in contradistinction to the remainder, would be an artificial procedure, producing a result as unsatisfactory as a tale half told.

Lucretia, sister of George Bancroft, tells of being asked whether her brother was not crazy, for he told the truth in his *History of the United States*. Only to the extent that historical writing is truthful is it deserving of the name of history. A distinction of the historical books of the Old Testament is their faithfulness in portraying both the elements of strength and weakness in their heroes. It is in part precisely because their portraits are true to life in the examples of weakness, folly, and sin, unflinchingly presented along with deeds of courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice that these books have retained a unique place in the world's historical literature. Objectivity is essential to authenticity in history.

A marked characteristic of the contemporary literature of early American Methodism was a tendency to treat of the chief figures in idealistic terms—in many cases to such an extent as to make them seem unreal. Even in the early histories, deficiencies and faults were glossed over and gross errors of judgment in some cases ignored. Writing in terms of present-day standards no historian would dare portray the actors in the drama of early Methodism as flawless men even though most of them were seriously striving after the Christian goal of perfection as taught by John Wesley.

The primary sources of early American Methodist history contain numerous inaccuracies and contradictions—a fact commented on by all of the early writers. Jesse Lee, author of the first history of American Methodism, complained of them. Abel Stevens, whose historical works on Methodism after more than three-quarters of a century are still recognized as outstanding and generally authoritative, had this to say: "Our early records were so defective . . . and many of the events . . . are so incoherently given by them, that it can hardly be presumed I have not made grave mistakes." Secondary sources carried over many of the errors of fact of the primary records. A further complication in the task of attaining accuracy of statement in present-day historical writing is found in the loss through the passing decades of innumerable invaluable records, such as diaries of many of the Circuit Riders, their letters, and the records of Classes and Societies formed by them.

As excellent bibliographies of early American Methodism are readily available it has not seemed essential to include a bibliography in Volume One. The notes and references indicate the wide range of sources drawn upon by the author. For convenience of those who may be interested in consulting sources the first citation of every work includes complete publishing data. A listing has also been made in the index of the first appearance of every work to which the author has had recourse. Among available bibliographies one that will be found useful is in W. B. Posey, *The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest, 1783-1824* (Tuskaloosa: Weatherford Printing Co., 1833). The most extensive bibliography compiled to date is that in

William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).

To make an accurate appraisal of the life and work of the early Methodist itinerant missionaries it is necessary to view them within their social milieu. Far too often church history has been treated wholly separate from social, economic, political, and cultural history. John Richard Green's declaration that political history to be intelligible and just "must be based on social history in its largest sense" has application also to religious history. To be understood and fairly evaluated, church history must be seen in the perspective of the society within which the Church functioned at a particular period—the society which the Church, to the extent that it was vital and vigorous, helped to shape and by which in turn it was in some measure conditioned.

Within the prescribed limits of Part One it has been impossible to set forth with any degree of thoroughness the many-sided character of American society during the first seven decades following national independence. But an attempt has been made to glimpse at least some of the more significant aspects of the changing social scene from 1769 to 1844, seeking an answer to such questions as: What was the life of different classes of people like during these decades? Under what conditions did they live? What were the chief problems, ideological and practical, for which answers were sought in religion?

If church historians have often erred in conceiving religious history as compartmentalized, writers of secular history have been equally prone to err in their frequent failure to recognize religious institutions, ideas, customs, and modes of behavior as significant factors in the shaping of social history as a whole. If dependence were solely placed on some widely circulated general histories of the United States one would not know that the American people possessed a Christian religious heritage or that the churches in general or a particular church—such, for example, as the Methodist Episcopal Church—had had any part whatever in American life.

Early American Methodism in fact played a distinctive role in the making of present-day America—one that in many quarters has received scant recognition. In the introduction to his invaluable collection of source materials, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, William Warren Sweet emphasizes the fact that "Puritanism has been given, and rightfully, a prominent place in the history of America, and its great contributions are well understood," while Methodism "neither has been understood nor have its contributions received adequate historic recognition." Certainly it is important that the part of the Methodist Movement in the shaping of our early national life and culture should be adequately set forth in authentic historical terms as a means of increasing popular understand-

ing and appreciation of the significant contribution it made to American history.

While Methodism during these decades was less strongly sectarian, in a doctrinal sense, than certain other Churches, it had a definite character of its own and contributed in distinctive ways to the religious life of America. Part One of this history undertakes to set forth its unique contributions, the essential content of the Methodist message, and the physical, moral, and spiritual needs of the people which the Methodist Circuit Riders felt themselves specially called upon to meet.

The deeper concern of the Methodists, both preachers and lay leaders, was with means of bringing people into vital union with God. To them God was real, not an abstraction, and their task was to acquaint men with Him through a vital experience of His power to save them from their sins. This they felt to be their supreme mission, and to this work they gave themselves with an energy and passion that made them in a peculiar sense an exemplification of the ideal of the Christian missionary, and the Movement which they led an outstanding example of a missionary Church.

WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY

Acknowledgments

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT is due to Ralph E. Diffendorfer, Executive Secretary of the Division of Foreign Missions, for his part in initiating the *History of Methodist Missions*, of which series this is the first volume. Without Dr. Diffendorfer's conviction of the need, and active support in the early stages of the project, the work would not have been undertaken.

Counsel and encouragement in the writing of Volume One have been given by numerous friends. Special assistance has been extended by James R. Joy, Librarian and Historian of the Methodist Historical Society in the City of New York, who has not only made the rich resources of the Society's library freely accessible, but also has called the author's attention to numerous rare books and historical documents with which he had not been previously acquainted. Dr. Joy has also read the entire manuscript thoughtfully and has made corrections and many helpful suggestions. J. Minton Batten, of the Department of Church History, School of Religion of Vanderbilt University, and Donald H. Yoder, Department of History of Muhlenberg College, also have read the manuscript as a whole with meticulous care, giving much help. Others who have generously taken of their time to read the entire manuscript include Bishop Francis J. McConnell, Bishop Lewis O. Hartman, Bishop William T. Watkins, Frank T. Cartwright, Elizabeth Lee, and Mrs. David D. Jones.

The author is under special obligation to his longtime friend, William Warren Sweet, whose contribution through his many books in the fields of American church history and the history of American Methodism has been unequalled. Dr. Sweet has given valuable general counsel and has made specific suggestions on Chapters I, II, and III. Others who have given special help on single chapters or sections of the manuscript include William L. Duren, on the Texas Mission and on other topics; Gordon Barkwell of the United Church of Canada, Chapter III; Bishop Willis J. King on the founding of the Liberia Mission; John W. Hawley on the Organization and Early Growth of the Methodist Protestant Church; and Hugh C. Tucker on the Beginnings of Methodist South American Missions.

Indebtedness is gratefully acknowledged to the custodians of numerous libraries who have extended willing cooperation. Special mention should be made of the generosity of the staff of the Columbia University Libraries in granting reference and exempt borrowing privileges of which constant use has been made; also of the staffs of the Missionary Research Library, the Union Theological Seminary Library, and the reference department of the New York Public Library. Isabel Howell and Bertha Childs of the library of the Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, have cooperated in making available valuable reference resources. Elmer T. Clark has given aid by freely according access to his private library. Assistance on special problems has been kindly rendered by John Alden, the Houghton Library, Harvard University; Mrs. Elleine H. Stones, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library; and O. Gerald Lawson, Rose Memorial Library, Drew University. Access to and permission to quote from primary source materials has been generously granted by Mrs. O. Grant Markham, transcript of the "Journal" of Philip Gatch; Westminster Theological Seminary, photostat copy of the manuscript "Journal" of Thomas Haskins; William H. Best of the Historical Society of the Baltimore Conference, "Diary" and other manuscript papers of John Kobler; Francis H. Tees, Librarian of the Historical Society of the Philadelphia Conference, "Journal" of Joseph Pilmoor; Library of Garrett Biblical Institute, typescript copy of the "Journal" of William Colbert.

To Ursula Colbourne, his editorial assistant, the author is indebted for suggestions on style and diction, for meticulous care in checking references, and for the preparation of the index. The four maps were drawn by William Schuhle, of Adrian College, and represent his personal contribution to the history.

Myrtle Cline of the Union Theological Seminary Staff and Dorothy Woodruff, in charge of the Board of Missions Library, have given sympathetic cooperation in locating materials and in supplying special information. In the final stage of verifying references important assistance has been rendered in the office by Noreen E. Barron and Bonnie L. Schlosser. To all these and others who have lent a helping hand grateful appreciation is expressed.

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The Wesleyan Heritage

EARLY AMERICAN METHODISM embodied the spiritual passion, the religious experience, and the faith and teaching of John Wesley (1703–91). It is a striking example of the fact that history often reincarnates the spirit and genius of a man. In American as in British Methodism Wesley continued to live long after his tireless heart had ceased to beat.

Wesley's missionaries who came to America were not pioneers in the sense of being originators. They brought with them the Methodism of Wesley. The impress of Wesley's mind and spirit was perhaps most evident in Francis Asbury, who has sometimes been called the American Wesley, but it was also evident in marked degree in Thomas Rankin, Robert Williams, Robert Strawbridge, and others. These men in turn imbued many of the American-born itinerants with the same spirit so that it may be said that for decades, and in some particulars permanently, American Methodism—even as the British Movement—was in a real sense, Wesleyanism. As in England Methodism was distinctly different from other dissenting groups, so also in America it differed from the other evangelical Churches.

On May 24, 1738, in a little meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, there came to Wesley a spiritual rebirth¹—the inner witness that he had long sought,* and with it a sense of vocation that ever afterwards was the mainstay of his life and work. Thereafter, for more than half a century he had but one purpose in life:

to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion; and by the grace of God to beget, preserve, and increase the life of God in the souls of men.²

Singleness of aim and certainty of his calling constituted in large part the driving power of his career. It also was an important factor in his influence with his preachers. A recent writer has compared Wesley and Lord Chatham, saying they had this in common: that both "were born leaders of men."³ But neither during his brief period as a curate nor during the months in Georgia

* On his deathbed, in April, 1735, Samuel Wesley had said to John: "The inward witness, son, the inward witness, that is the proof, the strongest proof, of Christianity."—Adam Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* . . . (Fourth Ed. New York: Carlton and Lanahan, n.d.), p. 276.

did he show himself to be such. Not until he had attained deep and abiding spiritual certainty was his capacity of leadership manifested. Not until then did he possess the spirit of his great calling as a world evangelist. In other words, his sense of vocation was grounded in his experience of God.

The religion of Wesley's age was lacking in any sense of immediate contact with the divine. The clergy of the Church of England—with some notable exceptions—did not think of religion or try to realize it or preach it as consisting in or as having the power of bringing men into an experience of personal fellowship with God. Enthusiasm (ἐνθουσιασμός) in its root meaning of possession by the indwelling God was an idea not only scouted but derided by the immense majority of the formal, self-satisfied churchmen of the time. But to Wesley, as the result of his long-continued, intense seeking, it not only became the center and soul of religion, but the rock on which his personal faith was founded. The dynamic of his religious life was his consciousness of intimate, personal union with God.⁴ In the climactic hour of his religious experience, God came alive in the totality of his being, and from that day the dynamic, wholly absorbing purpose of his life was to bring God into the consciousness, the conduct, and the character of individual men and women.

Wesley found a complete and satisfying expression of his sense of vocation in preaching. As Jesus, following His baptism and temptation, "came into Galilee, preaching"⁵ so Wesley, after his conversion experience, came preaching into every city, town, and village of England. Above all else the Wesleyan Movement represented "the revival on an unprecedented scale, and with unprecedented effects, of the office and work of the preacher."⁶ Preaching was Wesley's "supreme instrument."* For more than fifty years he preached an average of eight hundred sermons annually. Apparently, limitation of his preaching to Sunday, or to Sunday and one midweek service, never even occurred to him. Habitually he preached at five o'clock in the morning. For weeks on end he preached every day in the week, and not merely once a day but at morning, noon, and night. At eighty-five, in one period of eight weeks, he preached eighty times. Both in form and content of teaching his Movement was a reversion to type, a return to primitive Christianity. Again, as in the first Christian century, it was "God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe."⁷ Whatever else it may rightly be said to be, the Wesleyan heritage was a preaching ministry.

Wesley's activities were multiform and immensely varied. In fulfilling his ministry he used many means and methods. He formed Societies; he was a zealous educator; he was probably the greatest pamphleteer of his age; he was continuously writing letters; he became noted as a controversialist. In these

* The Methodist chapels were built for "Preaching-houses," and were almost invariably so designated in Wesley's references to them.

and numerous other ways he was incessantly active. His preaching journeys, he tells us, never involved less than "four thousand five hundred miles in a year."* His *Journal*, which he published in twenty-one parts, Augustine Birrell declares to be "the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned or endured."⁸ His energy and vigor of spirit seem never to have flagged.† Samuel Johnson, who had a keen appreciation of Wesley's personality and achievements, refers with mild irony to his constant activity:

John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk as I do.⁹

The charge of activism brought against American Christianity in general and Methodism in particular by European theologians finds its historical roots in no small part in the intellectual and religious activities of John Wesley.

The intensity that characterized Wesley's program of preaching was so integrally a part of his personality that it permeated every aspect of his Movement. It was strikingly evident in his sermons. He dealt with live issues in the thinking and in the moral and social life of the people of all classes. "John Wesley was one of those," says Trevelyan, "who could not be tranquil until he had cleared his conscience." The easy, comfortable, pleasing style that is so highly regarded and so frequently present in much popular, present-day sermonizing was entirely lacking in Wesley's discourses. It was the terrible earnestness and sincerity of his preaching that carried overwhelming conviction to the minds of great numbers of his hearers. He disturbed the consciences alike of churchmen and the unchurched. It was this, says Woodrow Wilson, that caused the doors of the churches to be shut against him—his preaching with "so disturbing a force and directness, as if he had come to take the peace of the Church away and stir men to a great spiritual revolution."¹⁰ So much a part of the Methodist Movement was this type of preaching that it carried over into the ministry of many of the early American preachers.

It was the quality of intensity in his preaching that accounted in large part for the charge of excessive emotionalism levelled at Wesley by so many of his antagonists. But in truth his sermons were not addressed to the emotions. He made no effort to "work up the feelings" of his hearers. His pulpit demeanor was studied and calm. He seldom raised his voice louder than in ordinary speech. He used no trumpet tones. He charged his preachers, John King in particular, not to scream in preaching.¹¹ He had little imagination, and his

* Augustine Birrell: "He did it for the most part on horseback. He paid more turnpikes than any man who ever bestrode a beast. Eight thousand miles was his annual record for many a long year, during each of which he seldom preached less frequently than a thousand times."—George Eayrs, *Letters of John Wesley* . . . (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), p. 11.

† Robert Southey: ". . . his manners were almost irresistibly winning, and his cheerfulness was like perpetual sunshine."—*Life of Wesley and Rise and Progress of Methodism* (New York: Harpers, 1847), I, 409.

printed sermons have no anecdotes or stories.* He almost never appealed to fear and made no attempt to arouse terror. The four volumes of his sermons that constitute in part the doctrinal standard of Methodism contain no sermon on hell† nor on heaven. His discourses were couched in simple, clear language, easily understandable by plain people—farmers, miners, shopkeepers, clerks, and housewives—and almost severely logical.

Closely allied to this element of dynamic intensity were the courage and pertinacity that enabled Wesley and his preachers to stand unperturbed and immovable against the onslaughts of abuse, slander, and persecution endured year after year, and decade after decade. The bitterness of the vilification and the violence of the attacks of the mobs are today almost beyond belief. Wesley's *Journal* describes no less than sixty riots. They broke out not only in Bristol, London, and Birmingham, but in all the counties of England, and in Wales. Again and again Wesley was in danger of his life, but always he was calm, undaunted, patient. At Walsall, in Staffordshire, for example, he found the street "full of fierce Ephesian beasts" who "roared and shouted, and threw stones incessantly," beating him down three times. Never for a moment did he consider ceasing to preach, even temporarily, or confining his effort to the places of least danger. Wesley was inclined to take Biblical injunctions literally, but the counsel advising that when persecuted in one city to flee into the next,¹² he showed no disposition to follow. He observed his prearranged schedule, come what might, and he revisited again and again the scenes of his most severe persecution. Undoubtedly there was a vein of pugnacity in his makeup, but his ability to hold his temper and to maintain emotional equilibrium in the presence of unprovoked abuse and most brutal persecution was astounding.

Second only to preaching as a means of fulfilling his ministry, Wesley placed the printed word. The complete *Bibliography*¹³ of Wesley's works by Richard Green lists over four hundred pamphlets, abridgments, translations, volumes of sermons, and other works written or edited by him. About 1738 he began the writing and extensive circulation of numerous tracts, which were so popular that he himself was amazed at the extent of their sale. He then began the compilation of the *Christian Library*,¹⁴ a series of fifty volumes, for the use of his preachers and the general public. Included in it were some of the masterpieces of the world's literature. He expected his preachers to be as diligent in the circulation of books as in preaching sermons. He enjoined them to carry books with them on every round of their Circuits: "Exert yourselves in this.

* Wesley in his outdoor preaching did not read his sermons and some of his hearers speak of his using stories with telling effect. Sir Walter Scott heard him preach more than once in the churchyard at Kelso, and says: "He told many excellent stories."—J. G. Lockhart, *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh: 1848), VI, 46.

† The only published sermon of Wesley's on hell (*Works* [Fourth Ed. 1840-2], VI, 360ff.) is "an elaborate argument, illustrated by many quotations and classical allusions which stamp it as an early academic exercise."—Sidney G. Dimond, *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival*, p. 83.

Be not ashamed. Be not weary. Leave no stone unturned.”¹⁵ He gave practical directions for their sale:

Carry one sort of books with you the first time you go the round, another sort the second time, and so on. Preach on the subject at each place; and, after preaching, encourage the congregation to buy and read. . . .¹⁶

At the London Conference of 1767 Wesley asked: “How may the books be spread more?” The question was answered: “Let every Assistant give them away prudently; and beg money of the rich, to buy books for the poor.”¹⁷ He exhorted his preachers to become diligent readers of books, warning them that no one could be a “deep preacher” without wide reading, “any more than a thorough Christian,” and enjoining them to spend “at least five hours in twenty-four in reading the most useful books.”¹⁸

Wesley did not invite controversy as such, but neither did he shun it.* The modern counsel of prudence: to avoid controversial subjects in religious teaching and preaching, would have shocked Wesley—awakening in him profound disapprobation. He constantly embarked upon the discussion of moot issues with vigor and conviction, without note or tone of apology. His religious opinions and beliefs he held tenaciously—and, as the historian Lecky declares, there are few things in ecclesiastical history more striking than the energy and success with which he propagated them.¹⁹

The amazing productivity of Wesley was the result of system and discipline quite as much as of intense activity. He was physically slight and frail,²⁰ but he was a firm believer in the virtue of a disciplined life and trained his body to be the efficient servant of an exacting, determined will. Preceding his ordination he adopted the plan of a detailed hour by hour schedule for every day in the week, a plan suggested to him by Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Dying*, which he slavishly followed to the year of his death. In 1725 he began to keep a *Diary*²¹ in which he recorded details of his daily program from four o’clock in the morning—his accustomed hour of rising—to retirement at eight, nine, or ten at night. His custom was to spend some minutes of every waking hour, no matter where he might be or however occupied, in prayer, singing, or other form of devotion. With the utmost energy of which he was capable he studied, worked, and prayed. He was no less punctilious as regards the use of money, keeping a strict accounting, recording every penny of his expenditures. And all of this he demanded of his preachers.

* In his *Journal* for May 20, 1742 (III, 10), Wesley tells of overtaking on the road “a serious man” whom he immediately engaged in conversation, suggesting that they keep to practical things “lest we should be angry with one another.” “And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer; told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley’s followers. I told him, ‘No, I am John Wesley himself.’ Upon which . . . he would gladly have run away outright. But, being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton.”

His directions for self-discipline Wesley incorporated in his *Rules of a Helper*, making them a permanent part of the Wesleyan heritage. Environmental conditions change radically from generation to generation but these practical counsels possess a quality of timelessness which has made them enduring.

The catholicity of Wesley was one of the marked qualities of his character. Although religion for him found its focus in an intimate, conscious, personal experience, he was not a sectarian. He had an intense and abiding loyalty to the Church of England but he also valued and exalted the vital teachings and the traditions of universal Christianity. In his preface to the *Lives of Various Eminent Persons*, including the life of Calvin, a volume in his *Christian Library*, he observes that "the same Spirit works the same work of grace in men upright in heart" of whatsoever denomination:

How far distant soever they are from each other, with regard to the circumstances of worship, they all meet in the substance of all true worship, the "faith that worketh by love."²²

Had he lived in the twentieth century he doubtless would have been zealous in devotion to and propagation of ecumenical Christianity. His catholicity is also shown in the range of his reading. In the earlier years of his itinerancy he read poetry, history, philosophy, theology, and science,* on horseback, and later—after the advent of turnpike roads—he nailed up one side of the coach that he used in his continuous travel and fitted it with bookshelves and a writing desk.²³

Wesley's interests were more of a practical nature than philosophical. Though he was an omnivorous reader and a lifelong student, and despite Southey's assertion that he was "the most influential mind of . . . [his] century,"²⁴ no one of his numerous biographers has claimed that he was a profound scholar.† To him the Christian religion was primarily and essentially a life to be lived—a life ruled by love of God and man.²⁵ Action and conduct were of greater concern than speculative thought. He laid down not a single dogmatic condition of admission to membership in the Methodist Societies. Nor did he bequeath to his Movement an original corpus of theology. Nevertheless it would be a mistake to infer that he did not attach great importance to right belief. His published sermons show that he gave a central place in his preaching to doctrinal teaching. In this, however, his aim was not so much

* Note, as an example of his interest in science, that in 1760 when as yet there was comparatively little scientific knowledge concerning the medical uses of electricity John Wesley published a pamphlet on the subject: *Electricity Made Plain and Useful*, "By a Lover of Mankind and of Common Sense."—See John Wesley, *Works*, II, 388; R. Green, *Bibliography*, pp. 114f.

† If not a profound scholar, Wesley had an unusual breadth of knowledge to which tribute was paid by no less a scholar than Frederic Loofs of Halle: "In the many-sidedness of his education, and in his unwearied interest in all branches of knowledge, he is without a peer amongst revival preachers in any age."—Quoted by Thomas E. Brigden, *A New History of Methodism*, W. G. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), I, 162.

that of bringing his hearers to the acceptance of a fixed set of theological beliefs as to win them "to a calm love of God and of one another, to a uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth."²⁶ In the tradition of Spener (1635-1705) he decried the type of scholasticism embodied in the Formula of Concord which conceived religion as consisting of the acceptance of a set of rigid theological formulas, assumed to include all theological truth in final and perfect form. Religion, he insisted, does not consist in the mere holding of orthodox opinions. It is rather the creation of a new nature, achieved through repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrines preached were few in number and concretely applied; the preaching aimed not so much at enforcing rigidly defined beliefs as breaking through the crust of practical unbelief, awakening the consciences of his hearers, and arousing them to immediate repentance and faith. His primary object was changing character. His sermons were concerned with the experience of salvation, and only secondarily with intellectual assent to a creed.* "We know no Gospel," he declared, "without salvation from sin."²⁷

The doctrinal teaching of Wesley as included in the four volumes of sermons which form part of the doctrinal standard of Methodism may be said to center in universal redemption; justification by faith and the new birth; the witness of the spirit, and sanctification. These are the doctrines on which Wesley concentrated and which he considered Methodism especially commissioned to promulgate. His sermons on what he calls speculative doctrines he did not include within the four volumes that contain the preaching standards.

Wesley's sermon on "Free Grace," first preached on April 29, 1739, and printed, despite the protest of Whitefield, is described by Thomas Jackson as "the most powerful and impassioned" of all his sermons.²⁸ Charles Wesley's hymn of thirty-six stanzas on "Universal Redemption," appended to the sermon when published, was a hymn in praise of God's "boundless grace" and universal love:

He would that all his truths should own,
His gospel all embrace,
Be justified by faith alone
And freely saved by grace.

The doctrine of free grace was an accepted, official dogma of the Church of England, but in the preaching of Wesley it took a new and more dynamic form—a striking example of a type of contribution made by the founder of Methodism. In the preaching of Wesley's Anglican contemporaries—with a few notable exceptions—the doctrine was subordinated, and when preached

* "I find more profit," said Wesley, "in sermons on either good temper or good works than in what are vulgarly called gospel sermons. That term is now become a mere *cant* word. I wish none of our Society would use it. It has no determinate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ and His blood or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!'"—*Letters*, VI, 326f.

was weak and anemic, carrying little conviction and assigning to the individual merely a passive role. Wesley's preaching enforced the obligation of the individual to exert his faith in reaching out to accept the grace freely offered and in acknowledging its reception; and to exercise his will in forsaking his old sins.²⁹ Interpreted in these positive, dynamic terms the doctrine became one of the central tenets of Methodist preaching, insistently proclaimed with conviction and power.

Throughout his ministry Wesley placed much emphasis upon justification by faith and the new birth.³⁰ The first Conference (1744), in answer to the first question: What to teach? began "with considering the doctrine of justification."³¹ The fifth sermon in the four-volume series of standard sermons is on this subject.³² In Whitefield's funeral sermon which Wesley preached on November 18, 1770, he exhorted his hearers to keep close "to the grand doctrines which . . . [Whitefield] delivered":

And may they not be summed up, as it were, in two words,—the new birth, and justification by faith? These let us insist upon with all boldness, at all times, and in all places;—in public, (those of us who are called thereto,) and at all opportunities in private. Keep close to these good, old, unfashionable doctrines, how many soever contradict and blaspheme.³³

In general he declared justification and regeneration to be simultaneous, occurring "in a short time, if not in a moment."³⁴ It is to be noted that Wesley seldom used the term "conversion," although he was insistent upon a moral transformation as essential evidence of the new birth. It is not too much to say that the reality of a personal religious experience, in transforming power, was the foundation of his whole theology.

The genuineness of the regenerating work of God in man's soul—forgiveness, regeneration, adoption—Wesley declared, is determined by appeal to one's own consciousness. It was the insistence of the Moravian pastor, Spangenberg, on this, that deepened Wesley's purpose to continue his painful search for reality in his own religious experience:

'Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?' I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, 'Do you know Jesus Christ?' I paused, and said, 'I know He is the Saviour of the world.' 'True,' replied he; 'but do you know He has saved you?' I answered, 'I hope He has died to save me.' He only added, 'Do you know yourself?' I said, 'I do.' But I fear they were vain words.³⁵

But the time came when he could answer "I do know" without hesitation or equivocation, preaching the Witness of the Spirit with such definiteness and conviction³⁶ that a scholar of historical distinction declares: "Never before in the history of the Church since the writings of St. Paul had the doctrines of Assurance been so clearly enunciated."³⁷ Herein is an abiding contribution to

the Church universal. To Methodism it has given much of its preaching power; has added definiteness to its evangelistic appeals; has supplied one of the qualifications required in candidates for its ministry; and has aided in making its interpretation of religion intelligible to plain people around the world.³⁸

No doctrine promulgated by Wesley was more severely criticized or aroused more overt antagonism than his teaching of Christian perfection, or sanctification. At first thought it seems strange that in the immense quantity of the literature directed against Wesley and his preachers there is not to be found a single "frontal attack" on the doctrine of the corruption of human nature, whereas their teaching on its perfectibility was subjected to scores of bitter, vindictive, persistent onslaughts.³⁹ Doubtless Dimond's suggestion offers partial explanation: that the doctrine challenged both the moral standards and the current orthodoxy of the eighteenth century.⁴⁰ The doctrine itself was not new. The possibility of sinless living had been acknowledged in the ancient and modern Church for centuries, and prayer for its fulfillment went up to God constantly in the petition of the Communion Prayer:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name.

The original element in Wesley's teaching of holiness was the urgency and insistency with which it was preached and in the broad practical application of the doctrine to everyday conduct.

In nothing did he exercise greater care in attempts to clarify his teaching. He himself had been slow to accept the possibility of sinlessness and nowhere in his writings does he claim to have attained the goal of holiness, but over and over he asserts that he is reaching after the prize.⁴¹ Nor does he ever seem to have been entirely satisfied with any definition that he formulated. Challenged on every side—even more within the Church than without—as to his meaning, and concerned to guard the members of his Societies against the extravagances of what was commonly spoken of as "sinless perfection," he frequently restated and redefined the doctrine in the light of criticisms and experiences and needs of his people. As a result inconsistencies are to be found in his statements, and nowhere a final or fully complete definition. For example, holiness (or sanctification) he speaks of as both gradual⁴² and instantaneous;⁴³ as present attainment⁴⁴ and unrealized ideal.⁴⁵ Its realization does not preclude growth.⁴⁶ Most helpful are his positive emphases: it involves salvation *from* sin, but its positive expression is the wholehearted love of God and man. It is the "restoration of the soul to its primitive health"; a unification of desire, affection, and will around a single object capable of inspiring complete and continuous loyalty—a dominant attitude, a "holy temper," an "habitual disposition"⁴⁷—love of God and our neighbor⁴⁸ inseparably linked

together. "These," he declared, "contain the whole of Christian perfection."⁴⁹

Near the close of his life he wrote to one of his preachers:

This doctrine is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appears to have raised us up.⁵⁰

While no teaching of Wesley was more generally misunderstood and more widely misinterpreted, his insistence on holiness (sanctification; perfect love; perfection) in two particulars made significant contribution to the Wesleyan heritage. In an age when the "lower classes" were despised, reckoned as of little account, and without possibilities within themselves of moral improvement or worthwhile achievement, Wesley insisted upon the capabilities inherent in every individual.⁵¹ It was possible, he declared, for any man—even the meanest and lowest of human creatures—by the grace of God and the nobleness within his own nature to rise to purity and holiness of life. The social implications of his teaching were in his own age, and continue to be, beyond estimate. In the second place the doctrine was an emphasis upon seeking and observing the "whole counsel" of God. It does not find its complete fulfillment in the inner life of the individual, though it begins there. It involves unification of the individual will with the will of God, and hence a consecration to the world mission of the Christ. Thus interpreted it had a large part in forming the missionary mind in early Methodism. The readiness of men and women in large numbers to brave the dangers and undergo the sacrifices of the wilderness and the most remote and primitive regions of the earth in no small part rooted in the entire consecration that Methodism insisted was essential to the Christian life in its fullness.

That there is a distinct vein of mysticism in the teaching of Wesley is indisputable. That Wesley's religious life was permanently deepened and enriched by his contact with the mysticism of Spangenberg and Böhler, few will question. At one period of his earlier life he was almost swept off his feet by extreme mystical emphases—a fact that he himself clearly recognized. Writing to his brother Samuel, on November 23, 1736, he said, "I think the rock on which I had the nearest made shipwreck of the faith was . . . the Mystics."⁵² Of speculative mysticism he became extremely critical,⁵³ but certain of his teachings exhibit close affinity with some of its practical elements: (1) a sense other than reason by which man may come into direct and immediate relation with the Infinite; (2) vital union with God, dissolved by sin, may be reestablished by the New Birth; (3) the Inner Light: "Christ, who is the true light reveals himself in us";⁵⁴ (4) without holiness no man can see God.⁵⁵

Wesley did not presume to make an original contribution to Christian doctrine. He claimed only to teach the religion of the Church of England, whose

doctrines he held to be the fundamental teaching of Christianity.⁵⁶ But he did that which his age sorely needed: he gave theology a living content—so simple, so easy of interpretation, and so preachable, that it was capable of popular presentation by men of limited training, thus lending itself to wide propagation by preachers recruited from the ranks of the common people, who in turn received it and made it the principle and rule of their lives. In so doing he transformed a set of lifeless formulas that had passed for religion into a dynamic force that wrought a miraculous change in the life of eighteenth-century England.

While none of the Methodist doctrines was original with Wesley, nowhere can be found a parallel to his system as a whole—if it can be designated a system. The Methodist teaching was drawn from a variety of sources—from the religious teaching of Susanna Wesley,⁵⁷ from the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England; from the Moravians; and from his own experience and that of his helpers. Inherited beliefs were modified, new interpretations of truth accepted, new opinions and methods developed in the light of needs discovered as the Movement spread and took organized form.* Anything, no matter from what source derived, that seemed to him to be an adulteration or weakening of the gospel of a free and full salvation was authoritatively set aside. What are the moral and religious needs of the people? and what will produce results in their lives? seem to have been the tests applied, although Wesley himself did not formulate them in precisely these words. It is in this pragmatic attitude that the originality of Wesley is to be seen.† Its catholicity and its pragmatism were two elements in the Wesleyan heritage that made it possible for Methodism to adapt itself to the rapidly changing conditions of the New World and in no small measure contributed to its phenomenal growth.

Although no doctrinal test was applied in the reception of members into the Societies and no doctrinal questions asked as a part of the discipline of the Band Meetings, Class Meetings, and Love Feasts, the procedure followed in the Conference and in the admission of preachers into full connection was quite different. In the former the purpose was the conversion of sinners and the nurture of the converted members in the life of holiness and service. In the Conferences a principal purpose was to insure that all of the Assistants and Helpers were preaching the same gospel, and to avoid all confusion, clashing, and contradiction of opinion and belief.⁵⁸

Soon after the beginning of field preaching Wesley found himself involved

* Cf. the *Minutes of the second British Conference (Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences, I, 7ff.)*, and of later Conferences, in which the doctrines and methods previously formulated were reviewed and in various particulars revised.

† Maximim Piette: "Was he not a pragmatist before all else?"—*John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*, p. 435.

in theological controversy, the implications of which for the missionary future of the Methodist Movement were profound. Through an extreme, although quite logical, interpretation of the meaning and function of justifying faith, some of the Moravian Brethren had developed an avowed contempt for "good works" and an acknowledged acceptance of the Antinomian position.⁵⁹ While Wesley was busily engaged in Bristol in 1739-40 the Moravian Molther had arrived in London and had begun the promulgation of Quietist doctrine in the Fetter Lane Society—insisting on "perfect repose of mind" and entire abstinence from "good works," as a hindrance to the free action of grace within the soul.⁶⁰ To Wesley this teaching was abhorrent, to be not only decried but rigidly resisted. Its acceptance would be fatal, not only to the experience of the individual, but to the progress of Methodism. Hence his insistence on separation from the Fetter Lane Society and the formation of a new group to meet at the Foundery.⁶¹

A second and much more bitter and prolonged controversy developed at about the same time as an outgrowth of Whitefield's pugnacious espousal of the doctrine of predestination⁶² and Wesley's insistence on free and universal grace. Wesley's sermon on "Free Grace"⁶³ opens with the insistence that the grace or love of God, "whence cometh our salvation," is "*free in all*" and "*free for all*." To predestination, or election, the sermon next interposes the objections: (1) That it renders all preaching vain, for the elect—with it or without it—will infallibly be saved; and the non-elect, with or without it—will infallibly be damned; (2) it tends to destroy meekness and love, and to inspire contempt and coldness toward those supposed to be outcasts from God; (3) it destroys need for good works and all motive to labor for the salvation of men, and all sense of responsibility for their spiritual and eternal welfare, for none can help or hinder a fixed fate; (4) it is nothing other than blasphemy, representing our Lord as a hypocrite, void of all sincerity, for it cannot be denied that "he everywhere speaks as if he was willing that all men should be saved."

And here I fix my feet. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil; more false, more cruel, more unjust. But you say you will prove it by Scripture? Hold! What will you prove by Scripture? That God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it cannot prove this. . . . It cannot mean that the God of truth is a liar. . . . It cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjust. No Scripture can mean that God is not love or that his mercy is not over all his works; that is, whatever it prove beside, no Scripture can prove predestination.⁶⁴

Printed as a pamphlet the sermon was widely circulated both in Great Britain and in America. Whitefield prepared a reply, no less vigorous in tone, which was seriously marred by a personal attack on Wesley's character. The issue was joined. On March 28, 1741, Wesley called on Whitefield in London:

He told me he and I preached two different gospels, and therefore he not only would not join with, or give me the right hand of fellowship, but was resolved publicly to preach against me and my brother, wheresoever he preached at all.⁶⁵

Seven days later, on April 4, he stated in his *Journal* that Whitefield had written and spoken enough "to make an open (and probably irreparable) breach between him and me. . . ." In fact, an irreparable break between the two had taken place. Observing from this distance the regrettable occurrence, it can readily be seen that Methodism—particularly in its contact with Calvinism in New England and elsewhere in America—would have been irretrievably weakened if Wesley had compromised with Whitefield's rigid doctrine of predestination.

No element in Methodist heritage is more real than the hymns of John and Charles Wesley and none is likely to be more enduring. Through them the temper and the teaching of Methodism have penetrated the faith and life of Christendom. When Wesley began his work the Church of England had no hymnbook and disdained the use of any hymns other than the Psalms metrically rendered. At his life's close not less than 4,395 hymns by the Wesleys had been printed.⁶⁶ In a preface to his collection of one hundred and forty hymns, *Sacred Harmony*, published in 1761, John Wesley says:

I want them [the Methodists] to have in one volume the best hymns which we have printed. . . . The following Collection contains all the tunes which are in common use among us.⁶⁷

A larger collection, the first Methodist hymnbook, *Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*, was issued by Wesley in 1780, the hymns "carefully arranged under proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians," making the book, he says, "in effect a body of experimental and practical divinity." It was by the frequent repetition, in singing, of the Wesleyan hymns—quite as much, or possibly more, than by listening to sermons—that the content of evangelical belief was shaped in the minds of converts.

Both John and Charles Wesley had a didactic purpose in the writing of their hymns⁶⁸ and as a result those who sang them were "learning by heart the great evangelical doctrines, and learning them with a lilt and rhythm that made them haunting and unforgettable."* The hymns of the first hymnbook sounded both the depth and reach of the Gospel message. It is significant that the first note struck is the missionary note.

To Wesley the Christian religion was love:

* . . . "long hence, when, possibly, the standard works of the elder brother are read only by the preachers, and the organization which he built up has been so modified as to show but little trace of its original form, the hymns of Charles Wesley will continue to permeate the Methodist Church with the gracious leaven of its primitive experience."—Frederick L. Wiseman, "Charles Wesley and the Hymn Writers of Methodism," in *A New History of Methodism*, W. G. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds., I, 242.

the love of God and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength. . . . This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men.⁶⁹

It is abundantly clear that to him love was not merely passive sentiment (one of his objections to the mystics being the "fondling, amorous" terminology and symbolism which characterized their writing)⁷⁰ but positive volition—active and outgoing, finding expression in service. Of the religious leaders of England he was the first, as W. H. Fitchett says, who "charged religion with social offices,"⁷¹ by which he evidently means that Wesley insisted that organized religion should both feel social responsibility and find effective ways and means of social expression. It was in no small part the sensing, by the British masses, of this element in his message that made Wesley's Movement pre-eminently "the church of the manufacturing and mining poor" of England.⁷²

The Christian religion, Wesley declared, "is essentially a social religion, and . . . to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it." And again:

The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social;* no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection. This commandment have we from Christ that he who loves God, love his brother also; and that we manifest our love by doing good unto all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith.⁷³

With religion thus conceived social service becomes basic in evangelism. It was so with Wesley. His method was first of all to convince men of their sins, for which they were personally responsible, and of the necessity of seeking God's forgiveness. Second, when they were assured of forgiveness and acceptance with God, he made them members of an intimate fellowship—a Class—where they were to watch over one another and stimulate one another to good works. Third, he enforced the duty and privilege of service in humble, practical ways: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting those who were sick or in prison, teaching the ignorant, seeking after sinners. There is scarcely a form of organized social service known today that Wesley did not in some fashion set in operation. And in everything that was done he first set the example.

As a member of the Oxford Club he visited the prisoners in the City Castle,

* Some writers have contended that the social interest and idealism of Methodism were merely incidental. For example, H. Richard Niebuhr: "The religious interest preceded the social. . . . Indeed, it may be maintained that the socially beneficial results of Methodism were never designed, but that they accrued as mere by-products of the movement." (*The Social Sources of Denominationalism* [New York: Henry Holt, 1929], p. 66.) To take this position is to misrepresent Wesley and his Movement. Niebuhr's contention is effectively controverted by many thorough students—contemporaries of Wesley, and recent authors. For a single example: the thorough, fully documented work of Wellman J. Warner: "The unique genius of the religious awakening [under Wesley] was to effect a new moral status for the individual in his social relationships, and it prescribed a method the effectiveness of which measured the soundness of its insight."—*The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 58f.

the common jail. When he returned from Georgia he resumed the practice. On Sunday, May 13, 1739, he wrote in his *Journal*: "Every morning I read prayers and preached at Newgate."⁷⁴ As late as the Conference of 1778 the question was asked, "Is it not advisable for us to visit all the gaols [jails] we can?" and the answer recorded, "By all means. There cannot be a greater charity."⁷⁵ Through public protests, Wesley also agitated against the wretched conditions that prevailed in the prisons, writing, for example, in 1761 to the *London Chronicle*:

Of all the seats of woe on this side hell, few, I suppose, exceed or even equal Newgate. If any region of horror could exceed it, a few years ago, Newgate in Bristol did; so great was the filth, the stench, the misery, and wickedness, . . . [it] shocked all who had a spark of humanity left.⁷⁶

Years later he was still publicizing conditions and criticizing prison administration methods.⁷⁷

In 1740 there was widespread suffering among the poor of England. Wesley took collections for poor relief at Kingswood, London, Bristol, and other places. At Bristol he was able "to feed a hundred, sometimes a hundred and fifty a day" of those who were suffering the most dire need.⁷⁸ In London, he supervised the distribution of clothes "which many who could spare them had brought for that purpose."⁷⁹ He used the Society Room for four months of the winter as a place of experiment in self-help, employing "twelve of the poorest," with a teacher, "in carding and spinning of cotton," in this way maintaining them "with very little more than the produce of their own labour." Again, in the winter of 1744, the record tells of Wesley's raising £ 276. in three separate collections which was used in providing linen, woolen clothing, and shoes for more than three hundred poor.⁸⁰ In connection with the Foundery in London a "poor-house" was established—two houses leased as a temporary place of refuge—especially for widows and fatherless children. Wesley records that at one time it housed "nine widows, one blind woman, two poor children, two upper servants, a maid and a man." He added the notation that at times it provided lodging also for four or five preachers, who when in town frequently stayed there and ate "with the poor, on the same food and at the same table." "Rules for the Stewards of the Methodist Societies," promulgated by Wesley in 1744, included the injunction: "If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor. . . . Put yourselves in the place of every poor man, and deal with him as you would God should deal with you."⁸¹

In 1746 Wesley's attention was called to the fact that many small business people, destitute of bank credit, needed occasional small loans to carry on their business. The only course open to them was resort to the pawnbrokers whose interest charges were exorbitant. Characteristically he says, "I resolved to try

if we could not find a remedy for this also." He appealed for contributions to a loan fund with the plea, "Join hands with God, to make a poor man live." He took public collections until the fund was sufficient to permit loans of £ 5. Within the first twelve months two hundred and fifty people⁸² were assisted.*

As early as 1744 the custom was established of keeping at London, Bristol, and Newcastle, collections of books on "physick" for reading and reference of the preachers, since they were expected as a part of their service to minister to the sick.⁸³ In 1746 the social ministry of the Societies was extended also to providing medicines for the poor. At Bristol Wesley opened a dispensary where, within a short time, two hundred persons were treated. At London the work was still more extensive. The plan was announced to the Society on December 4, and the following day thirty people came to the Foundery for treatment. Within five months "medicines were occasionally given to above five hundred persons."⁸⁴ An apothecary and an experienced surgeon were enlisted in giving assistance.⁸⁵ But even this did not satisfy Wesley. At Oxford, along with other studies, he had pursued "a course of regular medical study,"⁸⁶ and he now (1747) prepared and published a book on *Primitive Physic* for general circulation, which in the year of his death was in its twenty-third edition, and by 1828, its thirty-second. Many of its prescriptions were true to its title, such for example, as curing stomach-ache with a live puppy—the principle being doubtless the same as in the use of a hot water bottle—but numerous suggestions are in line with approved present-day medical practice. Its principles of hygienic living were far ahead of their time and remarkably sound.†

Systematic visitation of the sick was undertaken at an early period. In London in 1741 a small group of volunteer visitors worked under Wesley's direction. Later the service was expanded. "I chose six-and-forty," he records, "whom I judged to be of the most tender, loving spirit, divided the town into twenty-three parts, and desired two of them to visit the sick in each division."⁸⁷ Class Leaders were directed by the *Minutes* of 1748 to report to the preachers weekly every sick person and also to notify the regular visitor. Visitation was not limited to members of the Societies. Rules were issued by Conference for guidance of visitors.⁸⁸

In point of time the latest of the social agencies established within Wesley's lifetime was the Strangers' Friend Society. His first mention of it refers to a Society formed in London, in 1784.⁸⁹ Another was organized in Bristol in

* Herein is to be seen the seed plan from which the modern Cooperative Credit Union, now world-wide, has grown.

† Sir George Newham, in his *Health and Social Evolution* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1931, p. 41), commends *Primitive Physic* and credits to Wesley's influence the development of a widespread health movement resulting in more systematic sick visitation, domestic hygiene, and the founding of dispensaries. It is of interest also to note that Wesley was a pioneer in the therapeutic use of electricity, establishing four centers in London where patients could receive electric treatment. Cf. Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, II, 162.

1786.⁹⁰ One of the most active of the Societies was that in Manchester, of which Adam Clarke was the organizer. He states that "the most pious, sensible, and zealous young men of the Methodist Society" were appointed as visitors, charged with leaving no corner of the city unexplored in seeking in cellars and garrets the victims of poverty, distress, and illness. The objects were two: salvation of the souls of the ignorant and the profligate and the preservation of their lives by supplying food, clothing, and medical assistance.⁹¹ In one year 4,271 visits were made and 1,678 families were relieved. In twelve years £ 6,403. were expended and over 60,000 persons aided. Other than these two cities, Strangers' Friend Societies were organized in London, Hull, Bath, Leeds, York, Liverpool, Dublin, and other places.

In an age when schools and education were all but exclusively for the children of the privileged few,⁹² Wesley resolutely took the stand that education should be made available for all. Moreover in this, as in other matters, to think was to act, and he resolutely led the way by opening a school at the Foundery in London so that at least some of the children of the district "might have an opportunity of learning to read, write, and cast accounts."⁹³ In extent of accommodations it was not an ambitious undertaking—facilities being available for only sixty children—but it was a beginning.* Again in this an example was set that was not without influence since as time went on numerous other schools were established, some by local Societies, many others by individual Methodists in which Local Preachers or retired men were the masters.⁹⁴

So inwrought in Methodist tradition did zeal for education become that within a few years following the death of its founder, Circuit Riders who were themselves unable to compose or spell with any considerable degree of skill would feel impelled to organize schools in the wilderness outposts of the Western World.

From the beginning of his ministry Wesley had a care for the religious instruction of children. He was keenly aware of their relation to the building of the Church. At the 1768 Conference the reported increase of members for the year was only 430. Wesley was deeply concerned. "In many places," he said, "the work of God seems to stand still. What can be done to revive and enlarge it?" Numerous suggestions were recorded. Finally, he said:

But what can we do for the rising generation? Unless we can take care of these, the present revival of religion will be *res unius oetatis*: it will last only the age of a man. Who will labour herein? Let him that is jealous for God, and the souls of men, begin now.⁹⁵

Then follow five specific instructions, as valid and important today as when

* The first Methodist School was that established by Whitefield in February, 1739, for the colliers' children at Kingswood, later taken over and sustained by Wesley. A second Kingswood school was founded by Wesley in 1748 for the education of sons of preachers. This latter school is still in existence.

they were first given: (1) spend an hour a week with the children "whether you like it or no"; (2) talk with them "every time you see any at home"; (3) pray "in earnest for them"; (4) diligently instruct the parents, and "vehemently exhort all . . . at their . . . homes"; (5) "preach expressly on this. . . ."

When a missionary in Georgia (1736) Wesley had prepared a *Catechism for Children*. Some years later he edited a manual of *Instructions for Children*, which his preachers were required—when they made calls in the homes—to present to each child. At the Conference of 1748 he asked whether the children in every place might not be formed "into a little Society?" The experiment was made and Simon testifies that it succeeded. Here is the germ of the modern Children's Church. In 1756 Wesley records meeting with about a hundred children in Dublin, "who are catechized publicly twice a week." He commends the practice and exclaims, "What a pity that all our preachers in every place have not the zeal and wisdom" to do this.⁹⁶

In the encouragement he extended to Sunday schools, he immensely aided the extension of education for children. The Sunday school of Hannah Ball, a member of Wesley's Society at High Wycombe, was begun fourteen years before Robert Raikes started his work in Gloucester and this, in turn, was undertaken on the advice and with the assistance of a Methodist woman.⁹⁷

In certain of his counsels Wesley would seem to have been in advance of his time. In writing to Mary Bishop he said:

In praying with the children, you have only to ask for those things which you are sensible they most want, and that in the most plain, artless, and simple language which you can devise.

He declared the Church of England *Catechism* "utterly improper for children of six or seven years of age." He enjoined his preachers to "interest children in things rather than words." Was he familiar with the writings of Leibnitz (1646–1716), the German philosopher with whom the concept of "apperception" originated? At any rate he had grasped the principle and appreciated its value: "Carefully observe the few ideas which they [the children] have already, and endeavour to graft what you say upon them."⁹⁸

However, other of Wesley's ideas were narrow, intolerant, and positively harmful, such as his prohibition of play; his insistence on wholly separating the pupils of his boarding schools from home and parents; and his injunction to parents to "begin to break their [the child's] will the first moment it appears." It must be admitted that to educational theory and method he made no contribution. He shared in large measure the blindness of his age as regards the meaning of childhood. A contemporary, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), French philosopher—moral reprobate though he was—in his writings was

laying the foundation for the most significant development in the history of elementary education—the work of Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel. Wesley tells us that he read Rousseau's *Emile* and saw in it nothing new, nothing to commend!⁹⁹ So far as is possible to discover, it had no influence whatsoever on his thinking or his methods of dealing with children. He had other blind spots and various limitations—witness his blindness to esthetic values; his naïve, near-superstitious method of relying for guidance, when in a quandary, on the first chance text that met his eye on opening his Bible; and such mistakes of judgment as he exhibited in marrying Mrs. Vazeille—but nothing imposed such hampering limitation on the ongoing work of Methodism for many decades as Wesley's lack of understanding of child nature, of the interests and needs of children, and the perpetuation of defective methodology in work with children growing out of this lack.¹⁰⁰

The *organized* social service of Wesley and his Societies—varied and widely spread as it was—was relatively unimportant as compared to the spontaneous voluntary services of the Class Leaders and members of the Societies, the Local Preachers, the Assistants, and the Helpers. With many of them:

social relief work [was] so central that it consumed a large share of their time and became an avocation. . . . They made it their 'business to seek out the poor and needy . . . those who would not, and . . . others who could not,' come to them. . . . [Some] retired from active business in order to devote themselves exclusively to 'the promotion of religious and philanthropic objects' and the 'interests of public charities.'¹⁰¹

The saying of Wesley about use of money has been so often quoted that it is widely familiar: "Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can." The sermon as a whole in which it occurs—much less widely known—sets forth certain principles of far-reaching social import. Only one of these may we mention: money must not be gained at the expense of hurting our neighbor: (1) in his substance; or (2) in his body; or (3) in his soul. And the illustration that Wesley uses is the making or sale of "that liquid fire, commonly called drams or spirituous liquors." Of men who make or sell such liquid fire Wesley says:

[They] . . . are poisoners general. They murder His Majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell, like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who then would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them. The curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them!¹⁰²

A dichotomy existed in Wesley's thinking concerning sin and salvation which blinded him to the fact of corporate sin and guilt and imposed a serious limitation upon the social outreach and influence of his Movement. While his concept of the Christian Gospel was social, he conceived sin in almost wholly

individualistic terms—an inner contradiction destined to plague Methodism for many decades of its history. Wesley was deeply concerned about individual offences against the moral law—even petty derelictions—but he voiced little protest against corporate selfishness and greed, the injustices of the Poor Law, and the cruelties and oppression of the developing Factory System. Within a few years following his death, spiritual sons of Wesley of superior social insight began to be raised up.* But for much of their social reform they received little support, and for some of their measures intense opposition from organized Methodism.¹⁰³ Some were expelled from Methodist Societies because of their social activities, while others withdrew. Gradually, however, the strongly individualistic point of view was modified and eventually British Wesleyanism became influential in corporate social reform.†

Wesley was too deeply concerned for the ongoing effects of his Movement to be content merely with preaching to great audiences, awakening religious conviction, and influencing people to personal committal to the Christian life. He knew the re-enforcement of faith and Christian living that comes from intimate fellowship and the supporting power of organization. Whitefield had greater power over his audiences than Wesley but he lacked realization of the values of the social mechanisms that Wesley utilized with such marked success.¹⁰⁴ Few men have possessed greater genius than Wesley in creating fellowship groups—organic religious cells—and in developing effective forms of organization.‡

Here again, Wesley's pragmatic attitude was in evidence. The first Class, the basic unit in the Methodist Societies, was formed at Bristol on February 15, 1742, as a means for the systematic collection of funds for liquidation of a chapel debt. Wesley at once saw in it an indispensable auxiliary for inspira-

* Among the social reformers were James Rayner Stephens, a chief organizer of the Anti-Poor-Law Associations, suspended from the ministry on the charge of having offended against "the peaceable and anti-sectarian spirit" of the Connexion. (*Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, VII, 417ff.); Michael Thomas Sadler, as a young man author of an *apologia* for Wesley, later superintendent of a large Leeds Sunday school, and as a member of the House of Commons, a leading advocate of labor reform (Robert B. Seeley, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Michael Thomas Sadler* [London: 1842]); Thomas Cooper, for six years (1829-35) a Local Preacher, later one of the most influential of the leaders of the Chartist Movement (*Life of Thomas Cooper*, written by himself [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1872]); William Lovett, a regular attendant during childhood and early youth at Methodist Chapel services but who never joined the Connexion, leader of working-class politics in London, who in 1838 framed the original draft of the People's Charter (*William Lovett, Life and Struggles* . . . [London: G. Bell and Sons, 1920, reprinted from the first edition of 1876]); and Robert Oastler, long-time agitator for social reform and, with Stephens, active in promoting the Anti-Poor-Law Associations.

† In the meantime several generations of working-class people were lost to organized Christianity, large numbers embracing atheism. Having won the allegiance of the rural, the mining, and the factory poor, the Wesleyan Movement might have become the Church of the Industrial Revolution, but through its Tory affiliations, its political conservatism, and its undemocratic ecclesiastical government, it gradually lost its working-class following. (Harold U. Faulkner, *Chartism and the Churches* . . . , ch. I.) Belief became widely prevalent that the Churches were opposed to the social aspirations of the people (T. C. Hall, *The Social Meaning of Modern Religious Movements in England* [New York: Scribners, 1900]). By 1840, it was estimated by a prominent British churchman, three-fourths to nine-tenths of the working people of the nation "were neither church people, nor of any other religion."—*British Critic*, XXVIII (1840) 346.

‡ Wesley's peculiar skill was not so much in inventing new types of organization as in adapting previously existing forms to new uses. It was a chief part of his "singular power," says Woodrow Wilson, "that everything he touched took shape as if with a [new] sort of institutional life."—*John Wesley's Place in History*, p. 32.

tion and discipline. On March 25 a Class was formed in London and thereafter it was adopted as an essential element in the economy of the Societies*—the leaders virtually a lay pastorate:

That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they [the members] are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called *classes*, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled *the Leader*. It is his business, (1) to see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give towards the relief of the poor.¹⁰⁵

Within the Classes, a still smaller unit, the Band, was formed. The purpose of the Band and the procedure followed in its meetings are not so clearly defined by Wesley. The Band was invariably composed of persons of the same sex for intimate, personal confession and counsel—doubtless suggested by and modelled in part on the plan of the Oxford Club. The latter, however, was composed of intimate friends, whereas the Bands were made up of persons gathered into the Societies from different backgrounds, and more or less strangers to one another. Fitchett thinks that they “came perilously near the confessional and had some of . . . [its] mischiefs.”¹⁰⁶ After considerable trial they failed to commend themselves widely and gradually fell into disuse.

The primary organic unit of Methodism was the “Society.” It was not invented by Wesley but was an adaptation of a form of group organization that had had a long history within the Church of England, the first Societies having been formed about 1678 as a means of promoting “real holiness of heart and life” of the members.¹⁰⁷ At one time not less than forty active Societies existed in and about London, and others elsewhere. At the beginning of Wesley’s work few remained. At no time did they receive the formal sanction of the Anglican Church. The first Methodist Society was formed at the Foundery, Moorfields, London, in 1739—the parent Society of Methodism.¹⁰⁸

Love Feasts were general meetings of all members of the Societies, although at first only members of the Bands were admitted. The institution was not original with Wesley, but was taken over from the Moravians who established it in imitation of the *Agapae* of the early Christian Church. The early Methodist Love Feasts, usually continuing about two hours, were opened by singing and prayer, followed by partaking of “plain cakes” (or wafers) and water. A collection for the poor was then taken, after which all present were at liberty “to relate their religious experience.”

* Wesley saw in the Class an institution of primitive Christianity reestablished; as soon as any “were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin and seek the gospel salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these . . . ‘catechumens’ . . . apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities.”—*A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists, Works*, VIII, 251.

The Annual Conference is the most original contribution made by Wesley to Church polity. No other ecclesiastical body exercises quite the same functions. As developed up to the time of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church it was a deliberative council; a law-making assembly; a "cabinet of administration"; and a "court of discipline."¹⁰⁹

The first Annual Conference was convened by Wesley at the Foundery in London on June 25, 1744, and remained in session for six days. Its *Minutes* are entitled *Minutes of Some Late Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesleys and others*.¹¹⁰ In addition to John and Charles Wesley, it was composed, in its first session, of four other clergymen of the Church of England. The question was asked, "What laymen shall be invited?" Decision was made to invite four lay preachers, who were present at the subsequent sessions.¹¹¹ This Conference was given over entirely to discussion, chiefly of justification, faith, and sanctification—a testing and redefining by those present of doctrines contained in the Thirty-nine Articles in the light of their individual religious experiences. Year by year the scope of the agenda of the Conferences was broadened. In 1775, for the first time, the stationing list of preachers to Circuits is contained in the *Minutes*.^{*} In that year sixty-three preachers were present, who were appointed to eleven Circuits, two of which were Wales and Ireland.¹¹²

Thus, within a few years, the framework of Methodist polity was practically complete and, although Wesley seems not to have realized it, Methodism was definitely set in the way of ecclesiastical independence.¹¹³

In reality, independence was predetermined from the beginning, for the very genius of Wesley's system was its connexionalism. The United Societies—as Wesley liked to think of them, and himself called them—became the Methodist Connexion. By the Deed of Declaration the Connexion became a legal entity, recognized as such by the Lord Chancellor's decision, and the Conference became, within Methodism, the final court of appeal. By the Conference the separate Societies were bound into compact unity—uniform in doctrine and polity throughout the whole.¹¹⁴

No feature of early Methodism was more distinctive or more securely fixed as a part of Wesley's system than the itinerancy. It was a gradual development but Wesley soon recognized it as indispensable to the success of his Movement. Itinerating began when in 1742 Wesley added Newcastle-on-Tyne to London and Bristol, as one of his centers. The *Minutes* of the twelfth Conference (1755) are the first to use the term "itinerant preachers."¹¹⁵ From that time on he was irrevocably committed to the plan of itinerancy as contrasted to a settled ministry:

^{*} Minutes of the Conferences in the form of an annual record apparently were not published for the years 1750–64 inclusive. For the fifteen Conferences of this interim period only scanty records exist.

We have found by long and constant experience that a frequent change of teachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another. No one whom I ever yet knew has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing and perfecting the work of grace in an whole congregation.

When his missionaries began their work in America he insisted that the plan of itinerancy should be rigidly enforced. To Francis Asbury he wrote on September 30, 1785:

I am well assured, were I to preach three years together in one place, both the people and myself would grow as dead as stones. Indeed . . . [a settled pastorate] is quite contrary to the whole economy of Methodism: God has always wrought among us by a constant change of preachers.¹¹⁶

As a governing principle in a program of missionary expansion, Wesley's judgment had abundant verification, both in Great Britain and America. To this fact historians of independent judgment—notably Halévy—as well as Methodist authorities, bear witness.¹¹⁷

As the number of Wesley's preachers increased three classes were differentiated. Some were engaged in business or professional work as tradesmen, artisans, or teachers; and preached as a rule in their own neighborhoods only, occasionally taking preaching tours. In 1768 Wesley forbade his preachers to combine preaching with any other occupation. Others gave themselves to extended itineraries for a limited time, and then settled. A third group gave themselves wholly to the ministry and after a period of probation were admitted into what was called "full connection," which at that time was the Methodist equivalent of ordination.¹¹⁸ Of the third group some were known as "Helpers"; and a smaller number as "Assistants." The Assistants were chosen from among the more mature and experienced preachers and acted as personal representatives of Wesley in supervising the Helpers. Once a quarter the Assistant accompanied each Circuit preacher on his round, acting as leader of the Love Feasts and presiding in the reception of members. Here is to be seen the germ from which the presiding eldership grew.

Neither the Helpers nor the Assistants were ordained clergymen. In the early years of his Movement Wesley held the fervent hope that a sufficient number of the ordained clergy would come to his aid to carry forward the program of evangelism through the Societies that he organized. In this he was doomed to disappointment. Soon the multiplication of Societies made it impossible for him, and the few clergymen who were willing to help, to meet the rapidly increasing demands made upon them. In the earliest Religious Societies, a layman, in the absence of the parish priest, had led the Society meeting. To meet the emergency need, Wesley called upon a few of his most trusted laymen, in his absence, to take charge of meetings, reading from the Bible and from the Book of Common Prayer. At the Foundery Thomas Maxfield

took it upon himself also to preach. Word of the irregularity reached Wesley and he hurried back from Bristol to London to put an end to the breach of Church order. Fortunately he first conferred with his mother and, as more than once before, Susanna Wesley's common sense saved the day:

John, take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him for yourself.¹¹⁹

Wesley followed his mother's counsel and after hearing Maxfield and making inquiry, he was convinced. Four years later he said of his lay preachers:

I am bold to affirm, that these unlettered men have help from God for the great work of saving souls from death. . . . In answer to the objection, that they are laymen, I reply, the scribes of old, who were the ordinary preachers among the Jews, were not priests; they were not better than laymen.¹²⁰

The decision of Wesley to enlist laymen in the public services of the Methodist Societies was second only in its missionary significance to the adoption of field preaching. The time would come when in Great Britain alone the several Wesleyan groups would use not less than thirty thousand lay preachers.

At no stage of its early history was Methodism a democracy.* John Wesley was a Tory and by natural temper, training, and deliberate choice an autocrat. In his *Apologia* of 1766 he defined concisely the power which he declared "the Providence of God had cast upon . . . [him]:"

What is that power? It is a power of admitting into and excluding from the Societies under my care; of choosing and removing Stewards; of receiving or not receiving Helpers; of appointing them when, where, and how to help me; and of desiring any of them to meet me, when I see good.¹²¹

To this autocratic policy he resolutely held so long as he lived. His letter to John Mason, written in the year preceding his death, shows the same inflexibility:

As long as I live the people shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists. We have not and never had any such custom. We are no republicans, and never intend to be. It would be better for those that are so minded to go quietly away. I have been uniform both in doctrine and discipline for above these fifty years; and it is a little too late for me to turn into a new path now I am grey-headed.¹²²

The conflict in principle between his primary emphasis upon the reality and importance of individual religious experience and his despotic, authoritarian

* By E. Halévy it is aptly called "the High-Church of non-conformity." (*A History of the English People, 1830-41*, I, 156.) However, as Robert F. Wearmouth insists, Methodism was always greater than its annual assemblies and more democratic than its political professions. To understand the real nature of Methodism, one must not exaggerate the influence of its yearly Conference, or underestimate the importance of local administration."—*Methodism and the Working-Class Movements of England, 1800-1850*, p. 196.

rule¹²³ Wesley seems never to have realized.* Evidence is lacking to substantiate Southey's assertion that "the love of power was a ruling passion of his mind."¹²⁴ He was doubtless sincere, however mistaken he may have been in his self-analysis, in insisting that the exercise of power was a burden borne solely for the sake of the people and the cause.¹²⁵

Howsoever unrealized by Wesley the contradiction early became clearly evident to many preachers and people. More than one-half of the men whom he received into the Connexion left it early in life¹²⁶—some for economic and other reasons, but many because they were unwilling to bear with despotic rule. Many Methodists, no less than members of other sects representative of the religion of experience, were conscientiously opposed to ecclesiastical authoritarianism. Loyalty to Wesley as the "father of Methodism" kept the spirit of revolt within bounds during his lifetime but, following his death, protest steadily gained in volume and strength. Denial in 1796 of the right of the laity to representation in District meetings and in the Annual Conference resulted in schism and the organization of the Methodist New Connection in 1797.† This brought about a limited revision of the rules of Conference but also stiffened the general policy of the body against democratic reform. Jabez Bunting, who probably came as near as anyone to being Wesley's successor, after some years in the ministry came to the conclusion that the laity are entitled to assist in the management of the temporal affairs of the Church.¹²⁷ He is reputed to have said that "Methodism hates democracy as much as it hates sin."¹²⁸

The missionary impulse and motive were prominent in the Wesley family heritage. The first John Wesley (or Westley)—John Wesley's grandfather—burned with missionary passion. He earnestly sought opportunity to go as a missionary to Surinam in the Dutch East Indies, but family circumstances prevented. He also considered the possibility of missionary service in Maryland, but this door also was closed to him.¹²⁹ His son, Samuel Wesley (1666–1735)—John's father—when a young man, devised an ambitious scheme for missions in India, and in China and Abyssinia, which he put before the Archbishop of York, proposing that the British East India Company be enlisted in its promotion, and offering himself for missionary service.¹³⁰ The object, he declared, "would be well worth dying for." But for him also the way failed to

* It is important to note that, from the beginning of the organized Movement, in matters of theological opinion full liberty was sanctioned. At the first Annual Conference the following questions and answers were recorded:

"Q. 3. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

"A. In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced; in every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

"Q. 4. Can a Christian submit any farther than this, to any man, or number of men upon earth?

"A. It is plain he cannot: either to Bishop, Convocation, or General Council. . . ."—*Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences, I, Large Minutes*, pp. 444, 446.

† The leader of the secession was Alexander Kilham, a man of conspicuous ability and devotion who insisted that the preachers were the servants of the people, not their rulers.

open. Susanna Wesley maintained throughout her life a strong missionary interest. At one period she became so absorbed in the accounts of the heroic work of the Danish missionaries in Tranquebar that for several days "she could think or speak of little else."¹³¹ She was accustomed to give weekly missionary instruction to her children as a part of their religious training, and when John conferred with her concerning his resolution to go to Georgia, under Oglethorpe, as a missionary to the Indians she gave full assent, declaring: Had I twenty sons I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more.¹³²

As far as we know, Wesley never used the term "missionary" as applied either to himself or to his Movement, although he occasionally referred to his preachers as missionaries—for example, at the Leeds Conference of 1766:

Q. Why are not we more holy? . . . Why are we not all devoted to God? Breathing the whole spirit of Missionaries?¹³³

There can be little question but that the far reach of his own work and of the Methodist Societies was in his mind from an early period of his life career. Writing to his brother Samuel from Georgia in 1736, asking his "thoughts" upon a doctrinal scheme that he had drawn up, he added:

. . . give me them as particularly, fully, and strongly as your time will permit. They may be of consequence not only to all this province, but to nations of christians yet unborn.¹³⁴

The program on which he embarked two years later, developing within a brief period into a Movement designed to reach the neglected masses of Britain—particularly the poor of the declining rural districts, the new towns, and the mining areas of England and Wales—eventually became the most comprehensive and far-reaching home missionary enterprise of modern times. The fact that within Wesley's lifetime it did not reach out to the peoples of the non-Christian world was due not to indifference or neglect on Wesley's part but to the complexity and difficulty of the task immediately at hand. His preaching tours in the course of years took him to all parts of England and to extensive sections of Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. He came to know England from end to end and from side to side—of many parts of it, every square mile. He not only knew its cities—London, Bristol, Hull, and others—but its towns and small villages, its open fields and hills and valleys. He proclaimed the message of free salvation wherever he could get a handful of people together to listen. He formed Classes and Societies in every city and town and hamlet where response could be gained from as many as four or six earnest men and women. He bade his preachers go "to those who need you and to those who need you most." He knew an incredible number of the members of his Societies by name, and his ever-busy quill pen wrote to some hundreds of

them, addressing many by their first names. He bore upon his heart the intellectual, doctrinal, and moral problems of many of them—the high-born and cultured, but more often obscure disciples—who unburdened their souls to him in conversation and letters. Again and again and again from his own purse he relieved the necessities of his preachers and his humble poor. By his preaching, his innumerable tracts and books, and the various agencies that he called into existence and zealously promoted, he ministered to the bodies, minds, and souls of the people. For more than fifty years he longed, prayed, planned, and labored for the evangelization of the Church of England, yearning to make it—many of whose priests were as worldly minded as the miners, dockworkers, and shopkeepers whose conversion he passionately sought—a true Church of God. In all these ways John Wesley was a missionary, giving himself sacrificially to the christianization of eighteenth century England.

The missionary character of the Methodist Movement was a natural and almost inevitable outgrowth of its fundamental doctrine of universal redemption.* Its basic drives were such as made for world evangelization. The form of organization of the Societies—their primary emphasis upon fellowship, the absence of rigid dogmatic requirements, and their simplicity of organization admirably adapted the Movement to the work of missionary propagation. Because of its spirit and genius, the substance and power of its convictions, and the form and method of its organization, Methodism was early destined to become what is considered by many to be the mightiest missionary movement of modern times.

* G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth: "Amongst the larger Protestant Churches the Methodist Communion is that which alone, from the outset and distinctly, adopted a world-wide aim. . . . the Wesleyan Revival was a reaction against narrowing conceptions of the Gospel and the Church of Christ, whether Calvinistic, sacerdotal, nationalist, or particularist of whatever kind. . . . The logic of Free Grace admitted of no limits to its application within the human family. . . . How could one so believing, with rational consistency or with common gratitude, be indifferent to Foreign Missions? To assume such an attitude . . . would be to renounce the very ground on which his own assurance of salvation rests."—*The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 30f.



EARLY AMERICAN METHODISM, 1769-1844

VOLUME ONE

Missionary Motivation and Expansion



II

Colonial Planting

1769-84

METHODISM WAS LATE in coming to the American colonies. When John Wesley's first missionaries disembarked at Philadelphia in 1769 more than a century and a half had passed since the Church of England had come to the New World with the earliest settlers at Jamestown (1607). Colonial Congregationalism—its beginnings represented by the little company of separatists who landed on New England's bleak shores in 1620—also had been in existence for one hundred and fifty years. The Dutch Reformed Church was made the Established Church of New Netherland by the West India Company in 1640, the first church, in New Amsterdam, having been organized in 1628.¹ In the fall of 1636 the town of Providence, Rhode Island, was founded by Roger Williams to whom more than to any other one man is due the fact that liberty of conscience and freedom of religious belief were wrought into the warp and woof of American life. Three years later the first Baptist Church was formed in the settlement.² As a denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America dates from the formation of the first American Presbytery in 1706, when the Presbytery of Philadelphia was formed with the object of consulting "the proper measures for advancing and propagating Christianity."³

If Wesley had deliberately set himself to choose an inopportune time for planting Methodism in the New World he could not have done better than to fix upon the years immediately preceding the Revolution. Religion was in the trough of the wave of reaction following the Great Awakening of the middle decades of the century.⁴ The colonies from New Hampshire to Georgia were aflame with political turmoil. Following the Sugar Act of 1764 had come the Stamp Act of 1765, arousing many of the colonists to determined overt resistance. The Stamp Act had been repealed in 1766 but passions had been too deeply stirred to be placated. Eleventh-hour action of a government that too long had shown itself indifferent to the interests and welfare of its colonial subjects came too late. From this year forward the temper of many of the colonists was at the boiling point; few would listen to preachers newly arrived from Britain.

Colonial possessions of European nations in America had but recently undergone immense change. Only six years earlier, by the treaty of Paris (1763), Great Britain had received Canada and all the territory east of the Mississippi River, including Florida. All of the land west of the Mississippi, together with New Orleans, had been allocated to Spain, while France had been deprived of all possessions on the American continent.⁵

The population of the thirteen colonies can only be estimated. No census had ever been taken. It was perhaps two and a third million. Virginia had the largest number of people, with Massachusetts (including Maine), Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Maryland, Connecticut, and New York following in the order named. Of cities, Philadelphia was the largest; New York being second with about twenty thousand inhabitants. Savannah had probably about four hundred dwelling houses and seven hundred people. In all the colonies there were but five towns with as many as eight thousand people.⁶ The vast majority of the people lived on the land—so large a proportion that America has been described as “almost absolutely rural and her people . . . almost wholly devoted to agriculture.”⁷

As regards nationality the population was heterogeneous. When in 1790 the first census was taken about three-fifths of the white population were found to be of English stock, a ratio that was probably not very different in 1769.⁸ Scattered among the people of English descent there were many Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. The Dutch were mostly concentrated in eastern New York and New Jersey. The Germans constituted about one-third of the population of Pennsylvania.⁹

Approximately one-third of the total population were legally unfree, including Negro slaves* and indentured servants—in reality, white slaves. Indentured servants were of several classes. Some were European peasants who had sold themselves into servitude as a means of paying their passage across the Atlantic, mostly Germans who were “bound out” to Pennsylvania farmers. Many were persons who had been convicted of minor felonies in British courts and deported to the colonies where they were sold, usually for periods of four to fourteen years. An even larger number were boys and girls—children of poor, illiterate families—who had been kidnapped, most of them when fifteen to twenty years of age, from the seaport towns of Britain. The kidnapping of children of the poor and the “trepanning” of debtors and convicts constituted a trade possibly somewhat less vile than the African slave trade but essentially of much the same evil genius. White servitude was most prevalent in the Middle Colonies.¹⁰ Some fifteen to twenty thousand convicts had entered Maryland previous to 1775.

* In the Virginia court records up to 1660 Negro slaves were referred to as indentured servants. Their conditions of bondage evidently were substantially the same as those of white bond-servants.

About one-fifth of the total population in 1775, according to the estimate of Greene and Harrington, were Negroes. In New England they represented approximately 2.4 per cent. The largest number were in Massachusetts and Connecticut—in the two colonies about 12,000. In Rhode Island the proportion was the highest (6.3), numbering about 3,800. In New Hampshire and Vermont there were very few. In the Middle Colonies the Negro population was larger: in New York perhaps 25,000; in New Jersey 10,000; in Pennsylvania 6,000.¹¹

This very year of 1769 marked significant increase in the new western migration. During all the spring and summer the roads had been lined, wrote George Croghan a year later, "with wagons moving to the Ohio."¹² That one year, he estimated, had seen between four and five thousand families settle west of the mountains. It was in this same year that Daniel Boone made his first journey over the mountains from North Carolina into Kentucky, and in this year, also, that the first settlers went from Virginia to the valley of the Watauga River in Western North Carolina.¹³

Migration of settlers from the Middle Colonies into southwestern Pennsylvania had reached new proportions, continuing until the beginning of the Revolution. During the same period the immigration of Scotch-Irish from Ulster constituted an even more significant movement. From 1719 on it was under way in large volume.¹⁴ In 1730 a band of these immigrants seized fifteen thousand acres of Pennsylvania frontier land, the title to which was technically held by the proprietors of the colony, declaring "it was against the laws of God and nature that so much land should remain idle while so many Christians wanted it to labor on."¹⁵ By this year of 1769 one-third of the population of Pennsylvania were Scotch-Irish. Between 1720 and 1770, it is estimated by John Fiske, not less than half a million had transferred from Ulster to the colonies, constituting approximately one-sixth of the total population at the time of the Revolution. From the Allegheny region they filtered through the Shenandoah Valley into the Piedmont of Virginia and the Carolinas, ultimately building up the commonwealths of Tennessee and Kentucky. Among the emigrants were many Methodists. Settlements were made all along the Ohio and its tributaries, becoming sufficiently numerous to impress men of foresight with the importance of holding the vast and, as yet, comparatively unoccupied region between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi for the new nation that they envisioned coming into being.¹⁶ The capture from the British, in 1778, of the former French posts Cahokia and Kaskaskia on the Mississippi River, and of Vincennes on the Wabash, by George Rogers Clark and his volunteer forces, made possible its retention.¹⁷

Life in the frontier settlements was hard and stern. The cabins of the settlers were small, rude structures, with little light or ventilation, few conveniences,

and no comforts. Worse, in many settlements there was constant peril from hostile Indians: a stealthy approach, the war whoop, defenseless wife and children slain, the cabin in flames, and the disappearance of the Indians in the forest as suddenly as they had come, with the fresh scalps hanging from their belts.¹⁸

SOIL FOR THE PLANTING

Colonial America in the pre-Revolutionary period was characterized by distinct regions exhibiting marked differences—widely diverse geographical areas with varying economic interests, social patterns, and political ideals. New England and the Middle Colonies had much in common but were sufficiently unlike to be considered—as they considered themselves—distinct regions. The five Middle Colonies—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland—constituted a more or less clearly defined regional unit, although Maryland in some respects resembled Virginia more closely than it did New York. The tidewater South from Virginia to Georgia, with its plantation economy, was wholly distinct. Finally, there was the new West, indefinite in its boundaries, and only now in process of becoming a populated, recognizable region.* The back country of Virginia and North Carolina was definitely a part of the South, but had certain distinctive characteristics of its own. Socially and ideologically it exhibited sharp contrasts to the tidewater and as a region constituted a seedbed from which sprang many of the ways of thinking, manners, and customs that later distinguished the democratic West from the aristocratic, conservative East.¹⁹

New England was a region of widely distributed land ownership and for the most part of small compact settlements. The freeholds of rural New England as a rule consisted of one to two hundred acres. As there was practically no slave labor, a small farm of one hundred acres was considered sufficient—the work being done mostly by the farmer and his family.²⁰ Farm laborers and house servants were comparatively few. Why should one continue as a day laborer when it was easy to acquire a freehold and a reasonable competence as a freeman? The author of *American Husbandry* commented on the comfort and comparative material abundance of rural life: “the little freeholders and farmers live in the midst of a plenty of all the necessities of life; they do not acquire wealth, but they have comforts in abundance.”²¹ As a rule carpenters, masons, and painters possessed small freeholds, eking out their earnings by growing produce for family use. There were also common laborers whose income was scant and uncertain but extreme poverty was exceptional. Andrew

* Frederick J. Turner: “It is true that within each of these sections there were areas which were so different as to constitute almost independent divisions, and which had close affiliations with other sections. Nevertheless, the conventional grouping will reveal fundamental and contrasted interests and types of life between the various sections.”—*Rise of the New West, 1819–29* (New York: Harpers, 1906), p. 9.

Burnaby testified that in a journey of 1,200 miles through New England and the Middle Colonies he had not met with a single beggar.²² Yet in many communities there were paupers who were "on the town."

The politically and socially dominant group in New England consisted chiefly of wealthy merchants, principally wholesale importers and exporters, but including also some shipbuilders, distillers, the more substantial retail merchants, and some professional men. A far more numerous element was made up of petty freeholders, small tradesmen, and mechanics.²³

The Middle Colonies, in common with New England, had many small freeholds, together with tradesmen, artisans, and operators of small industries. There were more iron furnaces and forges in the colonies at the beginning of the Revolution than in England and Wales. As in New England, freehold farms consisted usually of not more than two hundred acres. But there were also numerous large manors in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York—in the latter alone, manorial grants embracing more than two and one-half million acres. In this year of 1769 five-sixths of the population of Westchester County (New York) lived within the confines of great estates. Farther north, along the Hudson, the Van Rensselaer manor embraced an area twenty-four by twenty-eight miles in extent.²⁴ Manors as a rule were farmed partly by the owners with the help of slaves and free laborers. The remainder was let out to tenants. In Delaware and Maryland slave labor was all but universal on estates and farms. Wheat, rye, barley, and oats were staple products. The milling of breadstuffs for domestic consumption and for export was a chief industry in Pennsylvania, and important also in New Jersey and New York.

The southern tidewater was characterized by comparative concentration of land ownership and absence of a yeoman class, whose place was taken by slaves. Many of the great estates consisted of thousands of acres—that of Robert Carter of Virginia embracing not less than sixty thousand acres.

The interior South—the back country of Virginia, North Carolina, and to a less extent South Carolina—was for the most part a region of small farms and free labor, whose people were still in the stage of frontier life. While many were poor, there was among them little abject poverty. For some decades there had been a gradual but steady migration into the back country from the tidewater and also from Pennsylvania—the latter chiefly of Scotch-Irish and Germans. The nucleus of the independence party in the earlier years was made up of the small farmers, the mechanics and artisans, and small tradesmen—the common people of the colonies.²⁵ In general, the large landholders, the rich merchants, and the lawyers whose clientele was made up principally of the aristocracy, were Loyalists.

Education was more widely diffused in New England than in any other region, and more nearly equal. Elementary education was not yet free in the

modern sense, but reasonably generous opportunities were available in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Rhode Island had a few schools but no public educational system until 1800, when the Legislature enacted a law providing that each town in the state should maintain "one or more free schools" with reading, writing, and arithmetic as required subjects.²⁶

In the Middle Colonies both elementary and secondary schools were few, and schoolmasters were held in low esteem. The governor of Maryland, in 1763, Horatio Sharpe, stated that the province had "not even one good grammar school."²⁷ In some sections the churches maintained schools—the charity schools of the Dutch Reformed and Anglican churches in New York City; the elementary schools of the Quakers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania; and the German-language schools of German religious groups in Pennsylvania. Illiteracy was widely prevalent. Noah Webster tells of a copy of instructions given to a representative of Maryland by his constituents on which of more than a hundred names subscribed "three-fifths were marked by a cross because the men could not write."²⁸

In the South there were so few schools that education was almost a monopoly of the rich. Josiah Martin, the last royal governor of North Carolina, is authority for the statement that in his time there were only two schools in the entire colony. However, there is basis for the assumption that about this time several schools were established by Presbyterian missionaries.²⁹ Between 1730 and 1770 there were but three schools in South Carolina. At the close of the Revolution the state had eleven public, three charity, and eight private schools.³⁰ Sons of the rich planters were sent to England for their education or had the instruction of private tutors; the sons of the poor were without opportunity for schooling. Throughout the colonial period a chief obstacle to the growth of free education was the doubt of the economically privileged of the desirability of education for the poor.³¹

Of the nine colonial colleges in existence immediately before the Revolution, four were in New England: Harvard, Yale, Rhode Island, and Dartmouth; four were in the Middle Colonies: King's at New York (later Columbia), the College of New Jersey at Princeton, Queen's at New Brunswick, and the College of Philadelphia; William and Mary was in Virginia. Of the fifty-four signers of the Declaration of Independence eighteen, at least, were college graduates or had at some time attended college. Of the general population probably not more than one in a thousand had a college education.³²

Colonial society, it is plainly evident, was a class society. Entail and primogeniture, as Jefferson pointed out, had "raised up a distinct set of families who, being privileged by law in the perpetuation of their wealth, were thus formed into a Patrician order."³³ Devereux Jarratt, Anglican rector, son of a carpenter-framer, was a member of a lower-class family. In his

Autobiography he tells how in his youth he took for granted the class distinctions in Virginia society and respectfully kept "a humble distance" from gentlemen as "beings of a superior order." This consciousness of difference between "simple" and "gentle" folk, he says, was general.³⁴ An aristocracy of gentility, based chiefly on wealth and social prestige, existed in New England* and, to a less marked degree, in the Middle Colonies. Governor Colden in 1765 divided the free inhabitants of New York into four classes. Three were privileged groups: (1) large landowners; (2) well-to-do merchants; and (3) professional men. In the fourth class he included mechanics and small farmers.³⁵ In the tidewater South there was one dominant class—the planter aristocracy. Grudgingly included were the wealthy merchants, for the South did not put the valuation upon money that was accorded it in New England. Besides the great planters, the tidewater had also "middle-class" farmers, owners of a small number of slaves; and numerous marginal farmers who in later times came to be known as "poor whites."†

Of all the colonies, South Carolina was the most aristocratic, and the most strongly British in loyalty. In contrast, North Carolina was one of the most democratic and anti-British. The social standing of the upper classes both in the northern colonies and in the South was to a certain extent shared by clergymen, lawyers, and doctors.

In all the colonies a property qualification for voting prevailed, in most cases, not less than \$150. to \$250. Right of franchise was based principally upon land, in six colonies ownership of real estate being required, no amount of personal property sufficing.³⁶ Office holders, both provincial and local, were drawn almost entirely from the privileged classes. Lower-class people were held in contempt by the aristocracy. Gouverneur Morris' oft-quoted remark is an example:

The mob begin to think and reason. Poor reptiles! . . . they bask in the sunshine, and ere noon they will bite, depend upon it. The gentry begin to fear this.³⁷

And well they might, for a new spirit was abroad in the land. Benjamin Franklin realized the fact and declared himself sympathetic toward it, condemning a social system which depressed "multitudes below the Savage State that a few may be rais'd above it." The basis of the movement—if it may be so designated—resided in the fact that despite the wide separation between

* At Harvard and Yale students were listed in the catalogues not in alphabetical order, or according to scholarship rank, but according to their social standing. In his Harvard class John Adams, the outstanding student, was ranked seventeenth on the college class record.

† European travelers visiting the colonies during this period were impressed by the lack of class consciousness and the spirit of democracy that prevailed. They saw little of the servility so characteristic of Europe. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, a native of France who became a naturalized citizen of New York in 1764, undoubtedly idealized American life, but his characterization is of value in gaining a true perspective: "Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a very few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. . . . Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida."—*Letters from an American Farmer*, reprinted from the original edition of 1782 (New York: Dutton, Everyman's Library), p. 40.

the classes and their many disparities, all had something in common. With a few exceptions they were all Americans, and the new spirit was "a somewhat vague composit" of the more liberal aspirations of men of the various regions and classes. It was most vocal and most determined among the common people who amidst the environment of a new world had become intolerant of the pretensions of people who assumed social superiority on the basis of birth and wealth, and had determined to be done with the arbitrary and tyrannical exercise of authority and power whether from abroad or at home. From early colonial days there had been internal struggle between upper-class and lower-class people, differing greatly in intensity in the several regions, but everywhere in evidence. Now it quickly took new form.³⁸

A new class, formed within a decade, growing rapidly in numbers, was rising to power. In Pennsylvania, as in a number of other colonies, it consisted of small farmers in the back country, Scotch-Irish and German immigrants, reenforced by the voteless laborers and artisans of Philadelphia [and] . . . other seaboard cities. . . .³⁹

Whatever reverence for the high-born the masses had formerly possessed was gone. Kings and potentates and irresponsible foreign ministers and governors no longer held terror for them. The wealthy merchants, the holders of the great manors, the tobacco and rice planters, the state clergy and the lawyers—these they proposed should no longer be suffered to rule over them without question.

MORALS AND RELIGION IN THE COLONIES

In 1769 nine of the thirteen colonies had an Established Church. The Congregational Church was established by law and supported by general taxation in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. In six of the colonies the Church of England was established. In Virginia, establishment was a provision of the original charter. Religious toleration was a provision of the original charter of the Carolinas but it also provided that only the Church of England should receive public support. At first, Georgia was a philanthropic enterprise but in 1752 when the proprietary charter expired it became a royal province and in 1758 the representative assembly passed a law establishing the Church of England. Four colonies, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, had no religious establishments and in them almost complete religious liberty prevailed.⁴⁰

Of religious denominations in the colonies there was no lack. In all those having Established Churches dissenters were numerous; in Maryland more numerous than adherents of the Establishment; in the Carolinas, Georgia, and New York, much more numerous. In addition to the Quakers in Pennsylvania, of whom there were many, the colony also had many Lutherans,

German Reformed, and Moravians, together with Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren (German Baptists or "Dunkards"). There were likewise Lutherans and Moravians in North Carolina and Georgia. New Jersey had many Quaker Societies.⁴¹ The Presbyterian Church was perhaps strongest in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, although it was represented also in New England and New York and in the back country of Virginia and North Carolina. At the beginning of the Revolution it had seventeen Presbyteries with 170 ministers. Its chief difficulties inhered in the fact that its ministers were too few in number and too much disposed to limit their labors to their small local parishes. Baptist churches numbered about seventy altogether, with approximately 5,000 members.⁴²

Despite the prevalence of denominations a large proportion of the population was uncared for. The Churches, numerous as they were, fell far short of meeting the religious needs of the people as a whole. The proportion of church membership to the total population was extremely small—according to some estimates not more than one in twenty-five—and the churches as such were making little impression upon the masses of the people. Their life and influence had been weakened by formalism, a religiously barren intellectualism, and a legalistic moralism. The vitalizing effects of the Great Awakening of the middle part of the century were by no means wholly lost, but a marked reaction was noticeable even in the sections where the influence of the revival had been strongest. Nevertheless, the pulpit remained the most influential single force in America for the formation and control of public opinion.

Most of those who were conspicuous in the public life of the time were men whose character and moral standards were reenforced by religious conviction. The English historian Lecky was impressed by the fact that, when the colonies faced war with England as inevitable, with one accord days of humiliation and prayer were appointed. Washington, in his "Farewell Address" (1796), emphasized the importance of morality and religion as political factors in the national life.⁴³

Religious conditions varied in the several regions. Massachusetts had 294 Congregational churches, eleven Episcopal, sixteen Baptist, and eighteen Quaker.⁴⁴ Much the same proportion prevailed throughout New England as a whole but with more Baptist churches in Rhode Island and possibly more Episcopal churches in Connecticut. The Presbyterians had five Presbyteries in New England as a whole, with thirty-two ministers.⁴⁵ Congregationalism, as evidenced by these statistics, was the dominating church influence, although where the sole church in a community was Congregational as a rule only a minority of the adults were full members. Even so, it traditionally represented religion in public thought and non-members were more or less loyal adherents. The Congregational minister exercised a public function and, being as a rule

the best-educated person in the community, exerted a strong social and political influence—particularly over upper-class people.⁴⁶ Emphasis upon strict observance of the moral law was strong but parish records of the period bear witness to numerous instances of fornication. Alcoholic liquors were in general use and drinking was not as a rule publicly condemned by the clergy, though some efforts were made to check its excessive use. Total abstinence was seldom advocated. Ministers in general also shared the prevailing attitude toward lotteries—a change from earlier Massachusetts opinion which condemned them as “‘tending to the utter ruin and impoverishment of families.’”⁴⁷

In the Middle Colonies wide diversity of religious faith and life prevailed. New York City may be taken as illustrating the multiplicity of different denominations though it cannot be considered typical of local communities in general. When appeal was first made for the sending of Methodist missionaries, the city had at least fourteen places of worship representing ten different religious fellowships: Anglican, three; Dutch Reformed, three; Church of Scotland, two; Quaker, one; Baptist, one; Lutheran, one; Moravian, one; French Reformed, one; Presbyterian, one; and Jewish synagogue, one.⁴⁸

The Dutch Reformed churches of the colony were suffering for lack of ministers. In 1772 there were only forty-one ministers for one hundred churches.⁴⁹ Remuneration was small; the cost of living, if household supplies and clothing were purchased in the market, was high; and ministering to widely separated congregations involved severe exertion. In consequence, churches had difficulty in inducing ministers to come from Holland to the colony. The Dutch were not accustomed to serving scattered flocks, and the necessity of tedious and dangerous trips through the woods and of crossing large bodies of water in little boats did not appeal to them. Even those who came, “educated in Holland . . . good and sincere men though most of them were, had little of the fire which is essential to the missionary and the reformer.”⁵⁰ Left without ministers for years, many of the churches languished, while older people became careless and indifferent and children grew up ignorant of religion. One minister wrote:

Many people here were born and grew up in the woods and know little of anything except what belongs to farming. Indeed it can hardly be believed what trouble and toil a minister has to introduce any civility into these places where there has never been a minister before. For many people here are like the wild horses of the woods which have never yet been broken.⁵¹

The Moravian Church established its principal center at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, although it had congregations in Philadelphia and elsewhere. The Moravians—German Pietists—were a sincere, deeply religious, friendly, tolerant, industrious people, imbued with the missionary spirit. They made a valuable cultural contribution through the high quality of their church music.

Their friendly attitude toward and practically helpful relations with the Indians stood in strong contrast to that of many others.⁵²

There were Lutheran congregations in New York and New Jersey, and a few as well in the southern colonies—both North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia—but Lutheranism was strongest in Pennsylvania. At this time there were probably fifty or sixty congregations in William Penn's province. Among all the elements in the colonies "the Germans very probably contained the smallest proportion of church members."⁵³

Much of northern and eastern New Jersey had been settled in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century as a part of the expansion of New England, with the result that New England culture, institutions, and religion were ineffaceably impressed upon the section. "Tho' some of these settlements were made, with some intermixtures, above a hundred and twenty years ago," wrote John Rutherford in 1786, "they still retain the manners, language and worship of their predecessors."⁵⁴ The early settlements were re-enforced by no less than five main streams of migration—the Dutch, the Swedes, the Quakers, the Scots, and New Englanders, of which New England people were most numerous.⁵⁵ Naturally these folk looked to New England for their ministers and for more than a century a procession of Calvinist preachers wended its way to New Jersey towns, lending their influence to the strengthening of the New England tradition. Meanwhile the incoming of Scotch, English, and Scotch-Irish immigrants, and constant contact with Dutch settlers, as well as with Quakers and Baptists, modified the New England inheritance and resulted in the development of a distinct East Jersey culture and the metamorphosis of New England Congregationalism into Presbyterianism, the congregations joining the Presbytery of Philadelphia. In time conflict developed within the Presbytery between Scotch Presbyterianism and English Congregationalism, resulting in division into "Old Lights" and "New Lights," and long-drawn-out, bitter controversy. The consequent obsession of preachers and laymen with theological disputation and ecclesiastical polity was not conducive to evangelism and missionary activity.⁵⁶

William Penn's colony placed no restrictions on immigration and people of all denominations—and none—came in, attracted by reports of its rich soil and exceptional facilities for trade. The Quaker population—centered in Philadelphia, Chester, and Bucks Counties—soon found themselves in possession of this world's goods to an extent that severely tested their devotion to their former simple, unostentatious ways. John Smith of Marlborough, writing in 1760, described the change that had taken place. Originally "a plain, lowly-minded people" whose meetings were marked by "much tenderness and contrition," by 1720 having increased in wealth and "in some degree conforming to the fashions of the world, true humility was less apparent and their meet-

ings in general were not so lively and edifying." When another twenty years had passed "many of them were grown very rich, and many made a specious appearance in the world," so that "marks of outward wealth and greatness appeared on some in our meetings of ministers and elders." There had been, in fact, "a continual increase of such ways of life" until "weakness" and "barrenness" overspread the Society.⁵⁷ By 1769 many Quakers were entering freely into the pleasures of gay life in Philadelphia, engaging in the dance assemblies and in "different games of cards." Quaker discipline made concessions to these indulgences, treating dancing, cards, and fencing as matters subject only to admonition and reproof, but placing an interdict upon attending the theater or participating in a theatrical play.* The attempt made by the Society to counteract worldliness among their members by the adoption and strict observance of rules of conduct tended more to formalism than to the vitalization of religious experience and life.⁵⁸ The energies of their ministers and of the Society were so largely expended in warnings, expostulations, and attempts at enforcement of discipline that growth was retarded and missionary activities limited.†

In Virginia, religious and moral conditions were deplorable. Establishment gave dominance to the Church of England but it fell far short of meeting the needs of the people. The Virginia Company in the seventeenth century had charged the Bishop of London to appoint clergy for the colony, which led to Virginia and the other Southern Colonies being considered as attached to the Diocese of London. No Bishop was designated to these colonies. Successive Bishops of London declined responsibility for their oversight. Few clergy were sent out and of those sent most were unsuitable—some "incompetent castoffs." The Church identified itself with the planter class, neglecting the common people. Devereux Jarratt, who became rector of the parish of Bath, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, on August 29, 1763, thus describes the existing situation:

Ignorance of the things of God, prophaneness, and irreligion, then prevailed among all ranks and degrees. So that I doubt if even the form of godliness was to be found in any one family of this large and populous parish. I was a stranger to the people: my doctrines were quite new to them; and were neither preached nor believed by any other clergyman, so far as I could learn, throughout the province.⁵⁹

Jarratt perhaps was not as completely alone as he felt himself to be. Bartholomew Yates, a contemporary, was an honorable and highly respected clergyman. James Craig, who became a rector somewhat earlier than Jarratt, bears

* Until 1789 a Pennsylvania statute prohibited "dramatic entertainments" within the city of Philadelphia and "neighborhood thereof." In that year the statute was repealed.—*Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania, 1682-1801* (Harrisburg Pub. Co., State Printer, 1908), XIII, 184f.

† Thomas J. Wertenbaker: "With the political control of Pennsylvania largely in their hands, with a wealthy membership and overflowing treasury, the Society might have opened a missionary campaign especially on the frontiers which would have expanded their influence indefinitely. But efforts of this kind came almost to a complete stop. . . ."—*The Founding of American Civilization, the Middle Colonies*, p. 206.

testimony similar to his, declaring that his predecessors had been shamefully negligent in the care of the flock, that great numbers "were ignorant in the very first principles of Christianity," and that two nearby parishes would be "much better without ministers, than . . . the two Brutes in that character."⁶⁰ The Rev. Anthony Gavin also had expressed his uneasiness in seeing "the greatest part of our brethren" taking up farming and buying slaves, which to him was "unlawful for any Christian and particularly clergymen."⁶¹ A fourth clergyman, Archibald McRoberts, whom Jarratt elsewhere refers to as a congenial and sympathetic friend, and who worked with Jarratt—frequently exchanging pulpits with him—became so disillusioned regarding the Church of England that, after some twenty years in its ministry, he renounced it and became a Presbyterian minister.⁶²

It is quite clear that too many of the southern clergy, dependent upon the planter class for their subsistence, as has so often happened in like instances had adopted their customs and ways of living. Manross, in his *History of the American Episcopal Church*, states that, while in the northern colonies the standard of ministerial life was probably as high as in any of the denominations, in the South the ministers who came from England "were generally men of limited abilities, of little ambition and no influence, and sometimes at least, of very little religion."⁶³ Some, it is clear, were so addicted to drunkenness, profanity, card playing, and fox hunting that they lost the respect of the better class of people. Conditions were probably worst in Maryland, and about equally bad in Virginia and South Carolina.* Bishop Wilberforce says that in Maryland "the scandal of ill-living clergymen had risen to a fearful height."⁶⁴

The strongest religious force at this time, both in Virginia and throughout the South, was Presbyterianism. It was when he came into touch with the Presbyterians that Devereux Jarratt first came into contact with "anything of a religious nature, or that tended to turn . . . [his] attention to the great concerns of eternity."⁶⁵ Unfortunately, Presbyterian ministers were far too few in number to reach more than a minority of the people with a religious message.

Strongest in Maryland, in the South as a whole Roman Catholics formed only a small minority. "Few Americans before 1776 knew a Catholic priest or had seen a Catholic service."⁶⁶

* The foregoing characterization of the Established Church clergy in Virginia is substantiated by testimony of Episcopal Church authorities. For example, Bishop William Meade, writing a few decades later, said: "That there was at this time not only defective preaching, but as might be expected, most evil living among the clergy, is evident from a petition of the clergy themselves to the legislature asking an increase of salary, saying, 'that the small encouragement given to clergymen is a reason why so few come into this Colony from the universities, and that so many who are a disgrace to the ministry find opportunities to fill the parishes.' It is a well-established fact that some who were discarded from the English Church yet obtained livings in Virginia." (*Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, Art. I, p. 16.) Evarts B. Greene, however, adopts a somewhat apologetic attitude: "In spite of the much publicized deficiencies of the Anglican clergy in the South, many of them were English university graduates and may well have been more broadly cultivated than some of their Puritan contemporaries."—*The Revolutionary Generation, 1763-1790*, p. 114.

The supremacy of orthodox Calvinism—the “New England theology”—was sharply challenged during this period in two separate quarters. In reaction against Puritan legalism and literalism in Biblical interpretation and the theological doctrines of original sin, predestination, and the Trinity, Unitarianism was developing at the very centers of Calvinism, Boston and Cambridge, and was destined to grow more rapidly following the Revolution. The second challenge was represented in the widespread espousal, by intellectuals, of the rationalistic philosophy of Deism. By-passing the dogmas of Calvinism as unscientific and rationally untenable, and condemning the system for ignoring the social teachings of Christianity, Deism aimed to infuse religion into all culture by bringing theological formulations into harmony with scientific knowledge and developing systems of ethics and politics on a rational basis. Deism was commendable in its emphasis on the personal, in its democratic trend, in its broad humanitarianism, and in its emphasis on “the use of reason as the gift of God for the discovery and investigation of Truth.” Its weakness lay in ignoring the historic values of Christianity, denial of the incarnation and any divine revelation in the Bible; relegating the immanent God of the New Testament to the position of an absentee Deity, and becoming lost in a barren intellectualism devoid of vital religious experience. Deists commonly held that “the supreme Being was fenced off from mankind by the laws of nature, and that human knowledge was bounded by the limits of sense-perception and logical reason.” God was thought of as far removed from His world.⁶⁷

The influence of Deism tended to make men “godless in practice as in thought.” Its principles were widely accepted by people of education and public influence in America and it did much to undermine orthodox Calvinism and also to weaken Anglican creedal authority. Many who continued church affiliation and more or less regular church attendance privately admitted that they were Deists in belief. Of the leaders of the Revolution Benjamin Franklin, Ethan Allen, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson are generally classed as Deists, while George Washington was strongly sympathetic.⁶⁸

FIRST PLANTING IN AMERICA

The first planting of the seed of Methodism in the New World was not of man's purpose or intent. If John Wesley had his eye upon America as a fertile field for the sowing he kept his own counsel, which was not his wont. It is difficult to comprehend—particularly in view of Wesley's missionary apprenticeship in Georgia in 1736–37—how it came that for twenty-four years Methodist Conferences were held annually in England* without consideration so

* The first Methodist Conference was held in London on June 25, 1744.

much as once being given to the sending of preachers to America. But such seems to have been the case.⁶⁹

How many Methodist immigrants and others had written to Wesley or appealed to him in person for preachers is not a matter of record. One extant letter—by far the most significant contemporary account of the beginnings of Methodism in New York—is a document of unique historical value. It was written by Thomas Taylor, an Irish Methodist layman, who had arrived in New York on October 26, 1767, and had been elected a member of the original group of trustees of Wesley Chapel for which building preparations were being made. The letter read:

New-York, 11th April, 1768.

Rev. and Very Dear Sir,—I intended writing to you for several weeks past, but a few of us had a very material transaction in view. I therefore postponed writing, until I could give you a particular account thereof. This was the purchasing of ground for building a preaching-house upon, which, by the blessing of God, we have now concluded. But, before I proceed, I shall give you a short account of the state of religion in this city. By the best intelligence I can collect, there was little either of the form or power of it until Mr. Whitefield came over, thirty years ago; and, even after his first and second visit, there appeared but little fruit of his labours. But, during his visit fourteen or fifteen years ago, there was a considerable shaking among the dry bones. Divers were savingly converted, and this work was much increased in his last journey, about fourteen years since, when his words were really like a hammer and as a fire. Most part of the adults were stirred up; great numbers pricked to the heart; and, by a judgment of charity, several found peace and joy in believing. The consequence of this work was, churches were crowded, and subscriptions raised for building new ones. Mr. Whitefield's example provoked most of the ministers to a much greater degree of earnestness; and, by the multitudes of people, young and old, rich and poor, flocking to the churches, religion became an honorable profession. . . . But in a while, instead of pressing forward and growing in grace (as he exhorted them), the generality were pleading for the remains of sin, and the necessity of being in darkness. They esteemed their opinions as the very essentials of Christianity, and regarded not holiness either of heart or life.

The above appears to me to be a genuine account of the state of religion in New York eighteen months ago, when it pleased God to rouse up Mr. Embury to employ his talent (which, for several years, had been, as it were, in a napkin), by calling sinners to repentance, and exhorting believers to let their light shine before men. He spoke at first only in his own house. A few were collected together, and joined in a little society, chiefly his own countrymen, Irish. . . . For some time few thought it worth their while to hear; but God so ordered it by His Providence, that, about fourteen months ago, Captain Webb, barrack-master at Albany, (who was converted three years since at Bristol), found them out, and preached in his regimentals. The novelty of a man preaching in a scarlet coat soon brought greater numbers to hear than the room could contain. . . . They soon found a place that had been built for a rigging-house, sixty feet in length, and eighteen in breadth.

About this period, Mr. Webb, whose wife's relations lived at Jamaica, on Long Island, took a house in that neighborhood, and began to preach in his own house, and several other places on Long Island. Within six months, about twenty-four persons received justifying grace, near half of them whites, the rest negroes. While

Mr. Webb (to borrow his own phrase), was 'Felling the trees on Long Island,' Brother Embury was exhorting all who attended on Thursday evenings, and Sunday mornings and evenings, at the 'Rigging House,' to flee from the wrath to come. His hearers began to increase, and some gave heed to his report. . . . He had formed two classes, one of the men and another of the women, but had never met the Society apart from the congregation, although there were six or seven men, and about the same number of women, who had a clear sense of their acceptance in the Beloved. . . .

Mr. Embury has lately been more zealous than formerly our house, for this six weeks past, would not contain half of the people.

We had some consultation how to remedy this inconvenience, and Mr. Embury proposed renting a lot of ground for twenty-one years, and to exert our utmost endeavors to build a wooden tabernacle [when] Providence opened such a door as we had no expectation of. A young man, a sincere Christian and constant hearer, though not joined in Society, would not give any thing toward this house, but offered ten pounds to buy a lot of ground, went of his own accord to a lady who had two lots to sell, on one of which there is a house that rents for eighteen pounds per annum. He found the purchase-money of the two lots was six hundred pounds, which she was willing should remain in the purchasers' hands on good security. We called once more on God for His direction, and resolved to purchase the whole. There are eight of us who are joint-purchasers, among whom Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton are men of property. I was determined the house should be on the same footing as the Orphan House at Newcastle, and others in England; but as we were ignorant how to draw the deeds, we purchased for us and our heirs, until a copy of the writing from England was sent us, which we desire may be sent by the first opportunity. . . . We have collected above one hundred pounds more than our own contributions, and have reason to hope, in the whole, we shall have two hundred pounds more, so that unless God is pleased to raise up friends, we shall yet be at a loss. I believe Messrs. Webb and Lupton will borrow or advance two hundred pounds rather than the building should not go forward; but the interest of money here is a great burden, which is seven per cent. Some of our brethren proposed writing to you for a collection in England, but I was averse to this, as I well know our friends there are overburdened already. Yet, so far I would earnestly beg, if you would intimate our circumstances to particular persons of ability, perhaps God would open their hearts to assist this infant Society, and contribute to the first preaching-house on the original Methodist plan in all America but I shall write no more on this head.

There is another point far more material, and in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in the name of the whole Society. We want an able and experienced preacher—one who has both gifts and graces necessary for the work. God has not despised the day of small things. There is a real work in many hearts, by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury; but although they are both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications necessary for such an undertaking, where they have none to direct them. And the progress of the gospel here depends much upon the qualifications of the preachers.

I have thought of Mr. Helton; for, if possible, we must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian—one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but, by the goodness of God, such a flame would be soon kindled as would never stop, until it reached the great South Sea. We may make many shifts to evade temporal inconveniences, but we cannot *purchase* such a

preacher as I have described. Dear Sir, I entreat you, for the good of thousands, to use your utmost endeavors to send one over. . . .

With respect to the money for payment of a preacher's passage over, if they could not procure it, we would sell our coats and shirts, and pay it. I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you and many of our brethren will not forget the Church in this wilderness.

T. T.⁷⁰

At the next Conference, following receipt of this letter, held at Bristol, on August 16-19, 1768, Wesley reported the appeal of the American brethren, but because of the urgent need for more preachers "at home" it "could not be entertained."⁷¹

On October 14, 1768, Dr. Charles Mangus von Wrangel of Philadelphia, provost of the Swedish churches in America, called on Wesley in London. Wesley's *Journal* has this entry:

Fri. 14.—I dined with Dr. Wrangel, one of the King of Sweden's chaplains, who has spent several years in Pennsylvania. His heart seemed to be greatly united to the American Christians, and he strongly pleaded for our sending some of our preachers to help them, multitudes of whom are as sheep without a shepherd.⁷²

Nine and one-half months passed. On August 1, 1769, Conference again convened. Wesley's account of the proceedings so far as they affect the sending of missionaries reads:

August 1, *Tues.*, [Our conference began at Leeds.] On *Thursday* I mentioned the case of our brethren at New York, who had built the first Methodist preaching-house in America, and were in great want of money, but much more of preachers. Two of our preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, willingly offered themselves for the service,* by whom we determined to send them fifty pounds as a token of our brotherly love.⁷³

In addition to the two Methodist lay preachers mentioned in Taylor's letter—Philip Embury and Captain Thomas Webb of the British army—another Irish immigrant, Robert Strawbridge, for some time had been preaching in Maryland. These two communities, New York City and Maryland, were the two seedplots in which Methodism was first planted in America.

George Whitefield,† it is true, had carried his flaming evangel back and

* Wesley's asking for volunteers and the action of Boardman and Pilmoor in offering themselves for missionary service in America set a precedent that has been consistently followed, both in England and in the United States, from that day to this. Methodist preachers are, and always have been, *sent* to their appointments—often without consultation in advance. Missionaries *volunteer* for particular fields and forms of service.

† George Whitefield (1714–70), son of an innkeeper, who in his eighteenth year entered Oxford as a "servitor-student," became one of the early members of the "Holy Club" and, after Wesley's departure for Georgia, its leader. He was ordained a priest of the Church of England in 1736. When the doors of the churches closed against him, he turned to field preaching (1739), thereby inaugurating his phenomenal evangelistic career in which he held meetings in all parts of the United Kingdom, attended by great crowds of people. He crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, sailing for America for the seventh time in September, 1769. He preached his last sermon in Exeter, N. H., standing "on the top of a hoghead by the meeting house, the house being too small to contain the congregation. . . . after meeting he rode on to Newburyport, [Mass.] . . . Soon after . . . he died on his knees on September 30, 1770." (Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists* . . . , pp. 36ff.) He had passed through Philadelphia on his way to the North, and calling on the Methodist preachers in the city "expressed his

forth from New England to Georgia over a period of thirty years. Seven visits in all he made to America—the first in 1738 and the last in 1770. Immense audiences waited on his ministry and many thousands were spiritually awakened by his preaching. In their evangelistic labors the early Methodist preachers undoubtedly profited from Whitefield's labors, even as did the Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican, and other Churches. But Whitefield had little concern for organization and except for an earnest attempt to establish Calvinistic Methodism in Georgia under the patronage of the Countess of Huntingdon, he had no part in establishing Wesleyan Methodism in the colonies.⁷⁴

Whether New York or Maryland had precedence in point of time in the beginning of Methodism in America has been the subject of long-drawn-out controversy. Conclusive historical evidence on priority cannot be said to exist.* Jesse Lee, author of the first historical account of "the rise and progress of the Methodists" (1810), a native of the South, specifically states that in the beginning of the year 1766 "the first permanent Methodist society was formed in the city of New-York," and that the "first Methodist meeting house . . . built in the United States, was that in New-York." He further states that "not long after the society was formed in New-York, Robert Strawbridge, from Ireland . . . began to hold meetings in public, and joined a society together near Pipe Creek [Frederick County, Maryland]."⁷⁵ Ezekiel Cooper (1763–1847), a native of Maryland, admitted into full connection in 1787, referring to the work of Philip Embury, says:

In New York, where the first society was formed. . . . The society increased in numbers, in friends and in strength; so that in the year 1768 they began to build the first Methodist chapel, in America. . . .⁷⁶

A conflicting statement by Asbury, recorded in his *Journal* under date of April 30, 1801, is frequently quoted in behalf of Maryland's claim:

We arrived to dine at Alexander Warfield's on Sam's Creek, and pushed on to Henry Willis's, on Pipe Creek, where it had been our intention to open Conference. . . . This settlement of Pipe Creek is the richest in the state: here Mr. Strawbridge formed the first society in Maryland—and *America*.⁷⁷

This assertion, however, is discounted by the fact that the official statement on the rise of Methodism in America printed in the third edition of the *Discipline* and retained unchanged by Asbury in successive editions until his death in 1816 makes no such decisive statement. Also it must be said in truth

great satisfaction at finding them in this country." In accord with his request Wesley preached his funeral sermon in London, speaking from the text, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Whitefield's body was interred in a vault under the pulpit of the Presbyterian meeting house of Newburyport, Mass.

* An attempt made by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church (1912–1916) to determine the question of priority by official commissions ended in failure.—See *Journal . . . General Conference*, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1916, pp. 453, 462, 692ff. *et. seq.*

that Francis Asbury was no historiographer. Not infrequently his *Journal* is vague and inexact in dating important events and certain of its dates have been proven to be incorrect.*

Of the numerous articles upon the subject, none of those that set forth "the Maryland traditional view"⁷⁸ can be said to locate the arrival of Strawbridge and the crucial events of the early period of his ministry in specific calendar years. In view of all the known testimony no more definite statement can be made than that of the early editions of the *Discipline*:

During the Space of thirty Years past certain Persons, Members of the Society emigrated from England and Ireland, and settled in various Parts of this Country. About twenty Years ago, Philip Embury, a local Preacher from Ireland, began to preach in the City of New York, and formed a Society of his own Countrymen and the Citizens. About the same Time, Robert Strawbridge, a local Preacher from Ireland, settled in Frederick County, in the State of Maryland, and preaching there formed some Societies. . . .⁷⁹

IN NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA

Under date of August 18, 1760, the *New York Mercury* carried this item:

The ship *Perry*, Captain Hogan, arrived here on Monday last in nine weeks from Limerick in Ireland, with a number of Germans, the Fathers of many of them having settled there in the Year 1710; but not having sufficient Scope in that country, chose to try their Fortunes in America. . . .⁸⁰

Among the names on the Perry's passenger list were Philip and Margaret (Switzer) Embury; David and Peter Embury (brothers of Philip); Paul and Barbara Heck; Peter Switzer, and several others.⁸¹ Some of the group were Wesleyans and one—Philip Embury—was a Methodist Local Preacher, but in the strange, new environment of New York they seem not at first to have formed a Class nor indeed to have held any meetings. Philip Embury, not finding a Methodist Society in New York, joined the Lutheran Church and had his children baptized by the Lutheran pastor.

In 1709, to go back to an earlier period, an extensive exodus caused by war devastation, economic oppression, and religious persecution brought German immigrants to England from the Rhenish or Lower Palatinate in such numbers as to arouse serious apprehension on the part of the British government. Eventually some thousands were settled in Ireland—of these, 130 families in the county of Limerick—some in colonial North Carolina, and a large contingent in New York, whence many later migrated to Pennsylvania.⁸² In 1752 John Wesley visited a group of the Limerick German villages—one of which was Ballingran (or Ballingarrene). There were many conversions in his

* John Atkinson: "... in his narration of significant events in American Methodist history Asbury faltered in a noticeable degree both as to exactness and correctness. . . ."—*History of the Origin of the Wesleyan Movement in America and of the Establishment Therein of Methodism* (Jersey City: Wesleyan Publishing Company, 1896), p. 15. See also pp. 7f., 10f.

meetings and Methodist Societies were organized. Wesley notes the visit in his *Journal*, but without extended comment.⁸³

Among the Ballingran converts was Philip Embury, then a young man of twenty-four. In a little book, long cherished by his family, these words were recorded :

On Christmas-day, being Monday, ye 25th of December, in the year 1752, the Lord shone into my soul by a glimpse of his redeeming love, being an earnest of my redemption in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Phil. Embury.⁸⁴

Philip Embury was a carpenter and there is a tradition that much of the timber work for the first Methodist church among the Palatines was done by him. Shortly after his conversion he was made a Class Leader and in 1758 when Wesley held his second Conference in Limerick he was recommended, among others, for the itinerancy. His religious work in Ireland was interrupted two years later by emigration to America.

Evidently, in New York the world was too much with them and soon the hearts of many of the German-Irish Methodists grew cold—but not the heart of Barbara Heck, cousin of Philip Embury. One evening when she came upon a group of the Palatines playing cards her zeal and ire were aroused and—so tradition records—she seized the deck from the card table and threw it into the fire. Forthwith she went to her cousin's house and exclaimed to Philip: "You must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands."⁸⁵ Her appeal was effective and soon thereafter, in the fall of 1766, Philip Embury preached his first sermon in his own hired house, so far as is known the first Methodist sermon ever preached in New York, to a congregation of five persons—his wife; Paul and Barbara Heck; John Lawrence; and Betty, an "African servant."⁸⁶ Soon the hearers increased to the point where Embury's little room was too small, and a larger room was found two blocks down Barrack Street. Here a Class of twelve persons was formed. The congregation grew and the use of a still larger room was procured on Horse and Cart Street (later, William Street), formerly a rigging loft, eighteen by sixty feet.⁸⁷ Furnished with benches and a desk, for the time being this provided a satisfactory meeting place. Preaching services were first held on Sabbath mornings at six; later on, Thursday evenings also.

Meanwhile Captain Thomas Webb (1724-96), who about the year 1765 had been brought to the "knowledge of salvation by remission of sins" under Wesley's ministry in Bristol, England, and licensed as a Local Preacher, had been stationed in Albany. On his arrival he established family prayer in his own house, a circumstance regarded as so singular in an army officer that, when it became noised about, created general astonishment. Curiosity grew to interest and several asked permission to join the family in prayer. These in-

vited others until the neighborhood was flocking to the prayer meeting in the captain's house. Encouraged by his success and hearing of Embury's work in New York, Captain Webb visited the city and responded to Embury's request that he assist him in preaching. He also visited Long Island and preached in Jamaica and elsewhere.⁸⁸ With Captain Webb's active cooperation, interest in Methodism in New York City and vicinity rapidly increased—so much so that members of the Society began to consider possibilities of building a meeting house.

A possible site was selected and, at first, leased at a stipulated rental of "one peppercorn,"⁸⁹ a term then used to designate a merely nominal rental. A subscription paper was circulated, with encouraging result. Subscriptions were received from 250 persons—contributions ranging from substantial sums to a few shillings.⁹⁰ The largest contributions were those of Thomas Webb and William Lupton, £ 30. each. James Duane, first mayor of New York, subscribed £ 2.; Dr. Samuel Auchmuty, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, £ 2.; and other prominent citizens varying amounts. The meeting house—Wesley Chapel, located on John Street—was built of ballast stone, faced with blue plaster. It was sixty feet in length, forty-two in breadth. As the law prohibited the building of "regular churches" by dissenters, the chapel was provided with "a fire-place and chimney" to "avoid the difficulty of the law." Philip Embury superintended the construction of the building, made the pulpit with his own hands, and on October 30, 1768,* preached the dedicatory sermon.⁹¹

The religious activities of Thomas Webb steadily widened. He was retired from the British army with the full pay of a captain and settled on Long Island. He preached in his rented house in Jamaica and soon formed a Society. He established preaching appointments not only on the Island but also in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. He became widely known as a successful evangelist. John Adams, who was a confirmed sermon-taster, heard him with admiration and described him as "the old soldier, one of the most eloquent men I ever heard; he reaches the imagination and touches the passions very well, and expresses himself with great propriety."⁹²

In Philadelphia, Thomas Webb preached in a sail loft and formed a Society of seven members that later became St. George's. Concerning him James M. Buckley wrote, "If Philip Embury founded Methodism in New York, Captain Webb was no less its founder in Philadelphia."⁹³ As in New York he had assured the building of Wesley Chapel by circulating a subscription list that he himself headed, so in Philadelphia his enterprise and generous support made possible the purchase in 1769 of the partially built church of a German Re-

* The deed of purchase was not executed until Nov. 2, 1770, two years after the building was dedicated. The lease was signed by Mary Barclay, widow of Henry Barclay, the second rector of Trinity Episcopal Church of New York City.

formed congregation,* in point of continuous use the oldest Methodist church building in America.⁹⁴ He was the first Methodist itinerant to preach in Trenton, New Mills, Burlington, and other places in the province of New Jersey. When later Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor landed near Philadelphia it was Thomas Webb who met them and welcomed them to America.⁹⁵ In 1772 on a trip to England, he busied himself, among other things, in recruiting missionaries for America. At the British Conference of that year he asked for Christopher Hopper and Joseph Benson, the commentator, but his request was overruled and two others were chosen instead.⁹⁶

IN MARYLAND

Robert Strawbridge, farmer-colonist from County Leitrim, Ireland, the founder of Methodism in Maryland, was for years the voluntary shepherd of the flock. He settled on Sam's Creek, Frederick County, probably between the years 1762 and 1766 and, as soon as he had built a cabin, made his house a preaching place.† There he proclaimed to all who came the free Gospel of salvation through faith in Christ. Unfortunately he kept no Journal and the records of his early activities are few and fragmentary.

Strawbridge was a man of strong convictions, courage, and independence—qualities which had involved him in conflict with authority before he left Ireland and that soon brought him into controversy with Church rule in America. Very early in his ministry he built the Sam's Creek Meeting House, organized a Methodist Society, and baptized and administered the Lord's Supper, waiting for no official sanction and feeling no need for ecclesiastical approval. For him it was enough that crowds waited upon his ministry, that many

* Under date of Nov. 23, 1769, Joseph Pilmoor records in his "Journal" the circumstances of the purchase: "We met to consult about getting a more convenient place to preach in. That we had would not contain half of the people who wanted to hear the word, and the winter was approaching so that we would not stand without. . . . At length we came to an agreement to purchase a very large shell of a Church that was built by the Dutch Presbyterians. . . . [It had been] put up at public auction and sold for seven hundred pounds, though it cost more than two thousand! . . . A gentleman's son who was *non-compos-mentis* . . . bought it. His Father, wanted to be off the bargain, but could not, without proving the insanity of his son. Rather than attempt this, he was willing to lose fifty pounds by the job. Thus the Lord provided for us . . . and we resolved to purchase the place which we did for six hundred and fifty pounds. How wonderful the dispensations of Providence!" (pp. 15ff.) The contract for purchase was signed on Nov. 23 and on the following day the building was dedicated by Pilmoor. Ten months later (Sept. 11, 1770) it was conveyed by deed to Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor, Thomas Webb, and six others. During the Revolution it was occupied for a time (1777) by soldiers of Howe's army. It was not plastered until the Methodists were organized as a Church. For almost a half century it was the largest house of worship of the Methodists in America and was widely known as the Methodist Cathedral.

† There is no authentic information on the date of birth of Strawbridge or the time of his leaving Ireland. William Crook says, "About the year 1764, or 1765, he married . . . and shortly after, probably in 1766 . . . [bade] farewell to Ireland. . . . I think it is impossible to prove that Strawbridge left Ireland before 1766. . . ." (*Ireland and the Centenary of American Methodism* . . . , pp. 149ff.) The statement of C. H. Crookshank in his *History of Methodism in Ireland* (I, 175) is of similar purport. John Shillington, said by Abel Stevens to be "the best Irish authority in the Methodist history and antiquities of his country," says, "Not earlier than 1764, not later than 1765" (Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . [New York: Carlton and Porter, 1864, 1864, 1867, 1867], I, 72). But see also William Hamilton, "Early Methodism in Maryland . . .," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, XXXVIII (July, 1856), pp. 431-448; John Lednum, *History of the Rise of Methodism in America* . . . , pp. 15ff.; John Atkinson, *The Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America*, chs. I, II; James M. Buckley, *History of Methodism in the United States*, I, 139ff.; J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered* . . . , chs. XVII, XVIII, XIX. See also comment of William Warren Sweet, *Men of Zeal*, p. 75.

burdened souls sought and found to their satisfaction the forgiveness of their sins and came into the fellowship of the Society that he had formed. By 1769, in addition to the Sam's Creek Society, a wide Circuit had been mapped out and a far-reaching revival was in progress. It is evident that Strawbridge was an effective preacher, who knew how to move men to action. Not least of the evidences of his success were the number of men whom he recruited for the ministry. Among the direct or indirect fruits of his labors were William Waters, the first American-born Traveling Preacher; Philip Gatch; Richard Owen, the first native Local Preacher, who later became an itinerant; Free-born Garrettson; and John Hagerty, all outstanding in the itinerancy during the early period. Numerous Local Preachers and Exhorters also were raised up by him.* No official record of members "in Society" exists earlier than that of the first Conference (1773). Indicative of the influence of Strawbridge is the fact that of 1,160 members reported, 500 were in Maryland, while New York had only 180; Philadelphia, 180; New Jersey, 200; and Virginia, 100.

At the first Conference (July, 1773) Strawbridge was appointed to the Baltimore Circuit, Asbury's name preceding his in the list of four preachers.

BRITISH MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN THE COLONIES

When the Leeds Conference of 1769 decided to respond to the appeal from America, Church of England missionaries had already been at work in the American colonies for almost three-quarters of a century.

EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITISH MISSIONARIES

The chief missionary agency previously represented was the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, the foreign branch of which was known as the S.P.G. (The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts), an official organization of the Church of England. It was granted a royal charter in June, 1701, having for its chief object missionary activities among emigrant English settlers in the British colonies. But it also had a concern for work among the Indians and among Negro slaves: "to prepare them for conversion, baptism, and communion." From the date of its organization to 1783 the Society sent 309 missionaries to the American colonies, of whom 84 were sent to New England; 58 to New York; 54 to South Carolina; 47 to Pennsylvania; 44 to New Jersey; 33 to North Carolina; and smaller numbers to Georgia, Maryland, and Virginia.⁹⁷

As is likely to be the case with missionaries, those of the S.P.G. met with no little criticism and some persecution. Charges against them were in-

* Abel Stevens: "Several [Local] Preachers were rapidly raised up by Strawbridge in his travels in Baltimore and Hartford counties: Sater Stephenson, Nathan Perigo, Richard Webster, and others; and many laymen, whose families have been identified with the whole subsequent progress of Methodism in their respective localities, if not in the nation generally."—*Op. cit.*, I, 76.

vestigated by the Society and some were withdrawn or dismissed. Early in the progress of their work (1711) Governor Hunter of New York wrote to the Society expressing satisfaction with what he described as "a good set of missionaries," saying that they "generally labour hard in their functions and are men of good lives and ability." Among them were several Anglican converts from Congregationalism of whom a good account is given. Two of the best known were Timothy Cutler, who became pastor of Christ Church, Boston, later president of Yale University, and Edward Bass of Newburyport. "Taken as a whole," says William Warren Sweet, "the long line of missionaries serving in America maintained a good reputation both from the standpoint of character and devotion to their work. . . . There were, however, few men of outstanding ability among them."⁹⁸

OVERSEAS EXTENSION OF BRITISH METHODISM

Two things are unmistakably clear concerning the appointment of Methodist preachers to America: the enterprise was considered as an overseas extension of British Methodism, and at the same time it was distinctly missionary in purpose. The first is evident from the official *Minutes* of the 1770 British Conference: "*Q[uestion]* 8. How are the Preachers stationed this year? *A[ns.]* As follows . . . 50. America, Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor. . . ." ⁹⁹ That was all. Their appointment was set down as all the others, fiftieth in the list. No designation other than that of all the preachers was attached. So far as the 1769 *Minutes* show, no special commission or charge was given them. This same order was followed year after year until in 1776 the Revolution made the outgoing of additional preachers impossible.

The extant letters of John Wesley include no correspondence with either Boardman or Pilmoor preceding or immediately after their outgoing. As the other preachers set off, following adjournment of Conference, for their Circuits in England, Wales, or Ireland, these two sailed, within three weeks, for their distant post. So with later appointees. Not until four years later (1773) when George Shadford, the sixth to go, was appointed did Wesley address to a missionary appointee a special message—this more as an affectionate farewell than anything else. Wesley wrote:

Dear George, — The time is arrived for you to embark for America. . . . I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can. I am, dear George,

Yours affectionately,
John Wesley ¹⁰⁰

However, in writing to Whitefield (his last letter to him), Wesley commended the young preachers to his counsel and regard:

... I must beg of you to supply my lack of service by encouraging our preachers as you judge best, who are as yet comparatively young and inexperienced, by giving them such advices as you think proper, and, above all, exhorting them, not only to love one another, but, if it be possible, as much as lies in them to live peaceably with all men.¹⁰¹

As it happened, Whitefield was in London at the time, preparing for embarkation on his last voyage to the colonies. In response to Wesley's note he sent for Boardman and Pilmoor, treating them "with all the kindness and tenderness of a father in Christ." Charles Wesley also invited them into his room, speaking "freely and kindly to them" concerning their mission.¹⁰²

Although included without distinction in the regular category of appointments, Boardman and Pilmoor, and those who followed them in successive years, were missionaries. As John S. Simon, author of the most recently published history of British Methodism and certainly one of the most able of Methodist historians, has written:¹⁰³

It is necessary to emphasize the fact that the Methodist Conference sent out Boardman and Pilmoor to America as 'missionaries' . . . John Wesley, in sending his preachers to America, did not forget his own 'marching orders.' He sent them as 'missionaries.'*

The response to Wesley's appeal to the Leeds Conference on August 3, 1769, was not spontaneous. Joseph Pilmoor himself records the fact that, although he had come to the Conference fully determined to offer himself for America, he did not immediately respond, "being afraid lest he should follow . . . [his] own will and inclinations rather than the Spirit and call of God. . . ." The following morning Wesley preached from the text, "I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me," and repeated his question—who is willing to go? Pilmoor and Boardman, having consulted Wesley and other preachers in the meantime, then offered themselves.¹⁰⁴

The hesitation manifested by Conference members may well have been due to a feeling of inadequacy for so great a task. Most of the men were young and comparatively inexperienced. America was an unknown world to them. That they did not lack interest in the great venture they demonstrated by reaching down in their purses and contributing out of their exceedingly slender resources—Fitchett describes them as "the worst paid company of men probably at that moment in Great Britain"¹⁰⁵—£20 for the passage across the Atlantic, and £50 in addition to apply on the building fund of Wesley Chapel in New York† "as a token of brotherly love."

* With the judgment of Simon, Professor George G. Findlay agrees: "The planting of American Methodism was distinctly the act of John Wesley and the British Conference; its history for the first eighteen years (1766-84) is a part of the history of Methodist missions."—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 201.

† Of this subscription Wesley sent to New York by Boardman and Pilmoor £25 in cash and the remainder in books to be sold, the proceeds to be applied to the building fund.—J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

Embarking at Gravesend on August 21 on the *Mary and Elizabeth*, the two missionaries landed at Gloucester Point, six miles below Philadelphia, on October 24, 1769.¹⁰⁶

Richard Boardman (1738–82), at this time thirty-one years of age, had been an itinerant preacher for six years, and was known as a pious, good-natured, sensible man—greatly beloved by all. He began his American ministry in New York City almost immediately after his arrival, occasionally changing with Pilmoor at Philadelphia, and sometimes making short excursions into the country.* Everywhere he was greeted with large audiences, and he seems to have been a successful evangelist, Nathan Bangs testifying that through his efforts “many were induced to seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁷ During the next year (1770), alternating with Pilmoor, he “preached considerably in the state of New Jersey; and went beyond New-York as far as West-Chester and New Rochelle.”¹⁰⁸

Boardman appears not to have been a man of rugged constitution. When Asbury arrived in New York on November 12, 1771, he found him there “in peace, but weak in body.” Few particulars are on record concerning his work other than that it was confined chiefly to the city of New York—a fact that weighed heavily on Asbury’s mind.¹⁰⁹ In the spring of 1772 he made a preaching tour to the north—going as far as Boston, where he tried unsuccessfully to form a Methodist Society—and then returned to New York.¹¹⁰ The *Minutes* of the first Conference, held in Philadelphia beginning July 14, 1773, do not include his name,¹¹¹ although as recently as April of 1772 he was acting as Wesley’s Assistant in stationing the preachers.

Of the first two missionaries Joseph Pilmoor (1739–1825) proved to be both more able and more aggressive. On the Sunday following his arrival in Philadelphia he preached at seven o’clock in the morning to “a fine congregation.” Later he attended public worship in the Episcopal church. In the afternoon at five o’clock he preached “on the Common adjoining the city.” The setting is best described in his own words:

I found a vast multitude gathered together. I got upon the stage erected for the Horse Race, and was presently surrounded with several thousands of genteel persons who all behaved with the utmost attention while I declared Christ Jesus the *Prophet, Priest, and King* of His people.¹¹²

Leaving the common he met the Methodist Society in their own “Room” and exhorted them “to walk worthy of their high calling, and adorn the gospel of Christ.” In his “Journal” he expressed delight with the day’s work. The next

* Boardman’s ministry in New York suffered by reason of the fact that about six months after his arrival Philip Embury and all the members of his Irish-German Class removed to Camden, later a part of Salem, Washington Co., N. Y. Embury organized the Society at Ashgrove, the first Methodist Society within the bounds of what is now the Troy Conference. In the summer of 1775 he died at the age of forty-five.—Cf. Francis Asbury, *Journal*, III, 368; J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 132f.

day he began preaching at five o'clock in the morning as was the Methodist custom in England. He wrote to Wesley that the people "thought it would not answer in America: however I resolved to try, and had a very good congregation." He was encouraged by his impression that the people "like to hear the Word, and seem to have some ideas of salvation by grace." He continued preaching in Philadelphia, and in the surrounding country, until the arrival of Asbury. He filled his days and weeks with ministry to the people, meeting the Society regularly. The congregation, first in the rigging loft, and later in the church purchased by Thomas Webb's energetic assistance, increased rapidly in number under his aggressive leadership. He established friendly relations with members of the Church of England clergy, attending numerous Episcopal services and, on invitation, preaching in their churches.

Francis Asbury had been appointed to America by Wesley in 1771. Soon he was insisting on "a wider circulation of preachers." In accordance with this demand, though with evident reluctance, Pilmoor left Philadelphia on May 26, 1772, on an extensive preaching tour through the South. He returned to Philadelphia on June 1, 1773. During this period of a year he spent about five and a half months in Norfolk, Virginia, preaching both in that town and "across the river" in Portsmouth, forming a Methodist Society in each place. A month and a half was given to ministry in Charleston, South Carolina—two weeks on his southward journey and a month on his return trip. His farthest point south was Savannah, Georgia, where he preached eleven times, and made a brief visit to Whitefield's Orphan House.¹¹³ Although the major portion of his time was spent in these cities, while journeying in his chaise from one city to another he paused many times to preach in villages, and in rural churches and homes, in Virginia and in North and South Carolina.

Neither Pilmoor nor Boardman was disposed to fall in line with Asbury's plan for endless itinerating, although Pilmoor refers in his "Journal" to not wanting to oppose "the measures of Mr. Wesley's delegate." The break between them evidently came over unwillingness on the part of Pilmoor to form a Circuit with a regular schedule of preaching appointments.* Rankin's arrival and his exercise of disciplinary authority did not help the situation. Asbury's comment on the proceedings of the Conference called by Rankin (July, 1773)† seems somewhat less than generous to Pilmoor:

There were some debates amongst the preachers in this conference, relative to the conduct of some who had manifested a desire to abide in the cities and live like gentlemen. Three years out of four have been already spent in the cities.¹¹⁴

* Under date of Dec. 7, 1772, Asbury writes: "... received a letter from Mr. P[ilmoor] which surpassed everything I ever had met with from a Methodist preacher. The Lord judge between him and me." (*Journal*, I, 54.) Pilmoor states his point of view in these words: "Frequent changes amongst Gospel preachers, may keep up the spirits of some kinds of people, but is never likely to promote the spirit of the Gospel nor increase true religion."—"Journal," p. 197.

† See pages 40, 53f.

In January, 1774, Pilmoor, together with Boardman, sailed for England. He was later to return to America, but not as a Methodist missionary. His unpublished "Journal" covering the four years of his first sojourn in America reveals him to have been a conscientious, devout, diligent, and successful minister.* He was constant in prayer, indefatigable in labor, devoted to his people, and in the best sense a popular preacher—in demand not only among Methodists but also among Baptists and Anglicans. He was rich in personal friends, many of whom regarded him with deep Christian affection. He in turn became deeply attached to the people whom he served, speaking of his Philadelphia parishioners as "my dear Philadelphians."

That he was a man of sensitive spirit and easily wounded feelings seems evident not only from his relations with Asbury but also from his reaction to counsels and directives sent by Wesley. He writes:

Fri. 4 [June, 1773]. Was a day of sharp tribulation indeed; Since I came to America I have had innumerable trials. . . . For more than two years Mr. Wesley, who should have been as a compassionate Father to us had treated us in a manner, not to be mentioned. During that time we have not had so much as one single letter that we could read to the people; nothing but jealous reflections, unkind suspicions, and sharp reproofs came from under his hand, which greatly discouraged us in the work, and would certainly have driven us away, if we had not regarded the work of the Lord above everything this world can possibly give . . . the usage I met with seized on my spirits, and threw me into such distress, that it presently destroyed my health and brought such weakness upon the whole nervous system, that I was on the very borders of melancholy, and in the utmost danger of losing my senses. . . . I was greatly amazed that Mr. Wesley should treat me as if I had been the foulest offender and an enemy to God and mankind!! O my God, I cry to Thee. Be Thou my refuge from the storm and still lift up my sinking head.¹¹⁵

Returning to England, Pilmoor continued for some years in association with Wesley and later came again to the United States, took orders in the Protestant Episcopal Church and served as rector, first in Pennsylvania, then for ten years in charge of Christ Church, New York, and later of St. Paul's in Philadelphia. He never lost his respect and love for the Methodist fellowship, continuing to the end of his life to make an annual subscription to the "Old Preachers' Fund." An incident with a touch of pathos concerning his later life is related by Wakeley. At the Conference of 1804, in Wesley Chapel (John Street Church), a tall, stately old gentleman entered and advanced to where Bishop Asbury was sitting. Asbury arose, shook hands with him, and then

* Judgments concerning Pilmoor and the value of his missionary service vary. Ezekiel Cooper, freely acknowledging that he was a celebrated preacher, says that he found in him "an assuming, overbearing manner," which rendered him "rather disagreeable." ("Diary," in *Beams of Light on Early Methodism in America*, G. A. Phoebus, Compiler [New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1887], p. 93.) Bishop McTyeire laments his leaving the Church of his early choice as "he had the heart and soul of a Methodist preacher, and much of the fire of the primitive itinerancy." (H. N. McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, p. 282.) W. W. Sweet says, "Pilmoor, next to Asbury, would in my opinion, rank as the most able [among Wesley's missionaries to America] and it is unfortunate for American Methodism that it proved impossible to hold him in the Methodist ranks."—*Op cit.*, pp. 105f.

turning said to the Conference: "This is Brother Pilmoor, who used to preach in this pulpit under the direction of Mr. John Wesley." Seemingly a bit taken aback, Pilmoor bowed, laid down his annual subscription to the Preachers' Fund, and retired from the room.¹¹⁶

Though they were the first regularly appointed missionaries, Boardman and Pilmoor were not the first to reach America. Priority attaches to Robert Williams, an Irish itinerant, who arrived in New York in August, 1769. In the spring of that year tidings had reached Ireland of Embury's work in New York and of his need for assistance. Williams spoke to Wesley, volunteering to go, but Wesley was hesitant. Williams had little love and less respect for the Anglican clergy with whom he had come into contact, and, being an outspoken man, had publicly denounced them to the people. Wesley was conscientiously opposed to speaking evil of ministers, or, as he said, "railing" at them. Though he had abundant cause for denunciation because of the long-continued slanderous abuse to which he had been subjected, he restrained himself from attack—or, except on rare occasions, even self-defense—and frequently exhorted his preachers to follow his example. Vituperation, he was convinced, was both useless and dangerous. On May 5, 1769, he visited Manorhamilton, Ireland, and was disappointed at the attitude of members of the Society. He wrote in his *Journal*:

There was a general love to the gospel here till simple R[obert] W[illiams] preached against the clergy. It is strange every one does not see (1) the sinfulness of railing at the clergy: if they are blind leaders of the blind, then (says our Lord) "Let them alone"; (2) the foolishness of it. It never can do good, and has frequently done much harm.¹¹⁷

Hence his reluctance to accede to Williams' request. But the young itinerant persisted in his entreaty and finally, impressed by his earnestness, Wesley agreed that he might go at his own expense on condition that he would labor "in subordination to the missionaries who were about to be sent out."¹¹⁸

Williams may have been poor in worldly goods and indiscreet in utterance but he was not lacking in resourcefulness. He had been a member of the Irish Conference for three years,¹¹⁹ was a popular preacher,* and had made fast friends. One of these—a Mr. Ashton, Methodist layman of Dublin—not only agreed to pay his passage but also to accompany him to New York. Notified that his friend was ready to sail, Williams sold his horse to defray his debts and pay his way to Dublin, and set off—his saddlebags on his arm—with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk.¹²⁰ Ashton was true to his promise and the two friends arrived in New York full two months in advance of the reg-

* Jesse Lee says, "Robert Williams . . . had been a local preacher in England. . . . an Englishman, but not a travelling preacher at that time." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 26f.) Lee is usually correct in his statements of fact but in this he is clearly in error. Nathan Bangs, in this evidently following Jesse Lee, falls into the same error of statement.—Cf. *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 63.

ularly appointed missionaries under whom he was to serve. Whether because of his initiative or other reason, in the list of appointments of the British Conference for 1770 Williams' name appears along with those of Pilmoor and Boardman without any qualifying clause.¹²¹

Williams lost no time after landing but went immediately to New York and freely offered his assistance to Philip Embury. He continued in New York after the arrival of Boardman. The records of the John Street Society carry numerous items of expenditure over a period of many months "for Mr. Williams": a book, a trunk, a hat, a cloak, *et cetera*, but the most frequently recurring item is for "keeping" his horse,¹²² clearly indicating that he possessed the itinerant spirit. An idea of the extent of his itineraries may be gained from Asbury's *Journal*.^{*} The first entry occurs under date of November 24, 1771:

I went with . . . brother W[illiams] to Westchester, which is about twenty miles from New-York.¹²³

Other entries appear at irregular intervals:

April 2 [1772]. I came to Philadelphia, and finding brother B[oardman] and brother W[illiams] there, was much comforted. Brother B[oardman]'s plan was . . . brother W[illiams] to [New] York . . .

April 8. Set out for Bohemia to find Mr. W[illiams] (who had been [traveling] at his own discretion,) that he might wait on Mr. B[oardman], in order to go to [New] York for five months. . . . I set off for Wilmington, expecting to meet Mr. W[illiams] there; but we accidentally met . . . about four miles from the town. He seemed glad to see me, and willing to be subject to order. The next morning Mr. W[illiams] went on his way to Philadelphia.

Wednesday, [April] 21. Met the [Philadelphia] society. . . . This night Brother W[illiams] came in from Virginia. . . .

April 23. Brother W[illiams] set off for New-York.

Monday, July 20. Met with brother S. [?] from New-York, who informed me that I was to go to [New] York. . . . He gave me an account of Mr. W[illiam]'s good behavior, though I fear, after all, he will settle at Bohemia [Manor, Md.].

. . . I set off on Monday [date uncertain, probably August 3, 1772] in a boat for New York; and arriving about five o'clock, found Mr. W[illiams], who that night had preached his farewell sermon, and told the people that he did not expect to see them any more. I have always dealt honestly with him, but he has been spoiled by gifts. He has been pretty strict in the society, but ended all with a general love-feast: which I think is undoing all he has done. However, none of these things move me.

August 4. . . . In the love-feast this evening, I found that the living could not bear the dead. Mr. W[illiams] rose up and spoke as well as he could, against speaking with severe reflections on his brother. But all this was mere talk. I know the man and his conversation.¹²⁴

These quotations are significant, not only in giving some indication of the

^{*} Asbury's custom in writing his *Journal* was to use only the initial letter of the surname, making identification in many cases uncertain and in some impossible. Frequently, as in these instances, the context makes clear to whom reference is made.

extent of Williams' itineraries, but also in revealing that Asbury and he did not see eye to eye on matters of policy and method. Williams exhibited a freedom of action that ran counter to Asbury's policy of exact adherence to Wesley's prescribed rules for his preachers and Societies, which caused Asbury to be critical—perhaps unjustly so—of Williams' character and work.

Williams' preaching tours had noteworthy results in Maryland and Virginia. William Watters, a native of Baltimore County, Maryland, states that he was chiefly instrumental in his spiritual awakening.¹²⁵ In describing Williams' first visit to Norfolk, "in the first part of the year 1772," Jesse Lee says that it "may be considered as the beginning of Methodism in Virginia."¹²⁶ W. W. Bennett credits him with permanently planting Methodism in the vicinity of Norfolk and Portsmouth.¹²⁷ William Watters describes a trip that he made—his first preaching tour—at "the invitation of that pious servant of the Lord, Robert Williams," leaving his home in Baltimore County, Maryland, in October, 1772, in the course of which meetings were held in different places in the county, including "Baltimore town"; also in Georgetown; in King William Court House, Virginia; and several other places on the three-hundred-mile journey. At Norfolk "Many hundreds attended preaching . . . the most hardened, wild, and ill behaved of any people had ever beheld in any place."¹²⁸

Early in 1773 Williams was invited to Petersburg, Virginia.¹²⁹ For some weeks he preached in the town and then made a tour through the surrounding country which resulted in an extensive revival—the first Methodist preacher to visit that part of Virginia.¹³⁰ Soon after, he crossed the state boundary into "the north part of North Carolina" and there also "souls were awakened and brought to the knowledge of God."¹³¹ His preaching tour took him into the parish of Devereux Jarratt, the evangelically minded Anglican rector, and in March he was a guest for a week in Jarratt's home. The acquaintance proved to be of mutual benefit. Williams drew inspiration and reassurance from Jarratt's rich intellectual store and religious fervor, and Jarratt gained from Williams a better understanding than he had previously had of the Methodists' spirit, purposes, and methods. Williams assured the rector that the Methodists "were true members of the Church of England" and that their purpose "was to build up and not to divide the Church."¹³² Jarratt described Williams as "a plain, artless, indefatigable Preacher of the gospel." He was, he said, "greatly blest in detecting the hypocrite, rasing false foundations, and stirring believers up to press after a present salvation from the remains of sin."¹³³

At the first Methodist Conference held in America (July 1, 1773) Williams was appointed to Petersburg, Virginia.¹³⁴ Again, his preaching resulted in an extensive revival. The following year he formed the first Methodist Circuit in Virginia, known as the Brunswick Circuit, extending from Petersburg to Roanoke River, and beyond, into North Carolina. This Circuit in part was

co-extensive with Jarratt's parish, in which—in some neighborhoods—marked spiritual awakenings had occurred over a period of two years. From this time on the two revivals were merged in what has become known as “the Great Awakening in Virginia.”¹³⁵

The name of Robert Williams does not appear in the list of appointments for 1774—the omission evidently an error, for it is included in the list of Assistants.¹³⁶ It reappears in the *Minutes* of the third Conference (1775) as one of five preachers assigned to the Brunswick Circuit, this fact in itself testifying to the wide extent of the revival that had been in progress. Of 3,148 members reported “in Society” at the 1775 Conference, 800 were on the Brunswick Circuit.¹³⁷

Williams rendered a significant service in beginning the publication and circulation of Methodist literature in America. In this, again, he showed his independence and initiative for, without the sanction of Wesley or of any Conference, he published tracts, sermons, and books—evidently at his own expense—and scattered them widely on his itineraries. Jesse Lee supplies more information than any other contemporary source:

Robert Williams . . . had reprinted many of Mr. Wesley's books, and had spread them through the country, to the great advantage of religion. The sermons which he printed in small pamphlets, and circulated among the people, had a very good effect, and gave the people great light and understanding in the nature of the new birth, and in the plan of salvation: and withal, they opened the way in many places for our preachers to be invited to preach where they had never been before.¹³⁸

That there was need for someone to concern himself with the distribution of literature is plainly evident. Asbury records that in a meeting which he held on September 6, 1772, apparently in New York, “for the better ordering of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the society,” he propounded as the sixteenth and last question, “Can we spread the books?” The comment recorded reads: “There was but little said on this head, and it was left undetermined.”¹³⁹

In doing what he did, no doubt with the best of intentions, Williams was following Wesley's example—doing in America what Wesley had done on a much wider scale in Great Britain—but, unlike Wesley, he was a man under authority, and when Asbury reported to Wesley what had been done he promptly ordered Williams to desist. It appears likely that Williams' action was one of the factors that caused Wesley to clothe Asbury with disciplinary power. Asbury wrote in his *Journal*:

Saturday [October], 10. I received a letter from Mr. Wesley, in which he required a strict attention to discipline. . . . He also enjoined that Mr. W[illiams] might not print any more books without his consent.¹⁴⁰

Williams also received a letter from Wesley, “enforcing our rules and dis-

cipline."¹⁴¹ It appears that Williams did not immediately cease his publishing activities for on March 24, 1773, Asbury states that he was "somewhat troubled" to hear of his having printed "some of Mr. Wesley's books for the sake of gain."¹⁴² Later, however, he records his judgment that Williams, although "a singular man," is "honest in his intentions and sincerely engaged for the prosperity of the work."¹⁴³ When the first Conference was held two of the six "rules . . . agreed to by all the preachers present" read:

4. None of the preachers . . . to reprint any of Mr. Wesley's books without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more, unless under the above restrictions.¹⁴⁴

On September 26, 1775, Robert Williams' fruitful ministry was brought to an untimely end by his death. Nathan Bangs says that he "had married, and located at a place between Norfolk and Suffolk."¹⁴⁵ Asbury still had his doubts concerning the publishing enterprise, rationalizing thus in his *Journal*:

The Lord does all things well: perhaps brother W. was in danger of being entangled in worldly business, and might thereby have injured the cause of God. So he was taken away from the evil to come.¹⁴⁶

After preaching a funeral sermon "at the burial" he added this tribute:

He has been a very useful, laborious man, and the Lord gave him many seals to his ministry. Perhaps no one in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls, as God has awakened by him.¹⁴⁷

Jesse Lee, who regarded him as his spiritual father, had no doubts concerning his integrity, declaring that though dead "he yet speaketh" to his many spiritual children "while they remember his faithful preaching, and his holy walk."¹⁴⁸

The British Methodist Conference *Minutes* of 1770 list John King as one of four preachers assigned to America. Uncertainty attaches to the circumstances of his coming to America as a missionary. Jesse Lee says that he arrived in 1769 some time after Boardman and Pilmoor without license "from Mr. Wesley, nor any recommendation from the Preachers in Europe,"¹⁴⁹ and this statement has been widely copied by writers of Methodist history. But it seems improbable that he lacked "license" from Wesley since his name appears among the regular appointments of the next succeeding British Conference.¹⁵⁰ There can be no doubt of his being a man of parts, well educated and of strong character. Wesley calls him "stubborn and headstrong." Evidently he was of much the same spirit as Strawbridge and Williams.

John King was born in England in 1746, educated at Oxford and at a London medical college from which he received an M.D. degree. He went to hear John Wesley preach and was converted. His father bitterly opposed his

religious zeal and when he persisted finally disinherited him. Persecution only strengthened his faith, and he became convinced that he must preach. Arriving in Philadelphia, he presented himself to Joseph Pilmoor but as he was unable to show proper credentials—perhaps he had neglected to take them with him when he left England—he was rebuffed. Undaunted, he lifted up his voice “in the potter’s field” and in that “humblest of sanctuaries, over the graves of the poor” preached his first sermon in America. In the crowd that assembled, there were Methodists who vouched for him to Pilmoor, who in turn permitted him to preach before the Society. He was licensed, went to Wilmington, Delaware, and preached “among a few people who were there earnestly seeking the Lord.” Afterwards he went to Maryland, where he was heartily welcomed by Strawbridge. He is believed to have been the first Methodist itinerant to preach in the city of Baltimore. His first sermon was delivered from “a blacksmith’s block, at the corner of French and Broad streets”; the second from “a table at the junction of Baltimore and Calvert streets.” Word of his sermon was noised abroad, coming to the attention of the rector who invited him to preach in St. Paul’s Church where he so made “the dust to fly from the old velvet cushion” that the invitation was not repeated.¹⁵¹

The *Minutes* record John King as one of ten preachers stationed at the first Methodist Conference. He was appointed, along with William Watters, to New Jersey. In 1774 he was sent to Norfolk, and in 1775 to Trenton. His name disappears from the *Minutes* of 1776, but reappears in 1777 when he was appointed together with John Dickins, LeRoy Cole, and Edward Pride to the North Carolina Circuit.¹⁵² Although only the second year of the Circuit, at its close 930 members were reported. This is the last year that his name appears in the *Minutes*. He had married and purchased a home near Louisburg, the present county seat of Franklin County, North Carolina, where he practiced medicine, continuing his religious activities as a Local Preacher. About 1789 he removed to Wake County, North Carolina, and in 1795 died the death of the righteous. Two of his sons, John Wesley and William Fletcher, became Methodist preachers.¹⁵³

The name of John King deserves a place of honor on the roll of Methodist pioneer missionaries. The fact is noteworthy that he was one of four of John Wesley’s missionaries who remained through the Revolution, to live and die on United States’ soil.*

The twenty-seventh Methodist Conference convened at Bristol on August 6, 1771. Wesley reported, “Our brethren in America call aloud for help,” and for the second time invited volunteers for missionary service, asking, “Who are willing to go over and help them?” The recorded answer was “Five are

* The other three who remained in the United States were Robert Williams, Francis Asbury, and James Dempster.

willing." The two appointed were Francis Asbury and Richard Wright. In Francis Asbury, British Methodism made its supreme contribution to America, a man, declares George G. Findlay, the missionary historian of Wesleyan Methodism, "in character, labor, and influence comparable to John Wesley himself."¹⁵⁴

Asbury, according to his own account, was born in England, in the parish of Handsworth, near the foot of Hampstead Bridge, about four miles from Birmingham, in Staffordshire, on the twentieth or twenty-first of August, 1745, the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Asbury.¹⁵⁵ The parents, in economic and social status, were middle-class people.¹⁵⁶ The father was not wealthy but he was in comfortable circumstances. He was not professedly religious but he permitted evangelical preaching and the holding of "band meetings" in his house. He died about 1798 at the age of eighty-four or eighty-five years. Elizabeth Asbury was a devoutly religious woman. Before the birth of her only son she was profoundly impressed with what she believed to be a vision from God, foretelling that her child would be a boy and that he was destined to be a great religious leader who would spread the Gospel among the heathen. From the day of his birth she began to prepare him for his divinely predestined ministry. As soon as he was old enough to understand she read the Bible to him for an hour each day, singing hymns and praying over him for another hour. It was her purpose that her son should take orders in the Anglican Church.¹⁵⁷ She died on January 6, 1802, at the age of eighty-seven or eighty-eight.¹⁵⁸

Francis Asbury's education was in marked contrast to that of John Wesley. He had little formal schooling. He was early placed at the best school within convenient reach, that of Arthur Taylor at Sneal's Green, in the vicinity of Barr. He was removed from school before the age of fourteen, to be apprenticed in business. But these few years were sufficient "to ground him well in his mother tongue; [and for him to acquire] studious habits and a serious way of thinking which enabled him to pursue his education with little help from others."¹⁵⁹

When forty-seven years of age Asbury set down in his *Journal* a brief account of his early religious life. Before he was fourteen years of age he was "awakened" by the conversation and prayers of a pious man, not a Methodist, whom his mother invited to her house. He began to pray morning and evening. He discontinued attendance at the local church, where was a "blind priest," and in a neighboring parish heard Ryland, Stillfleet, Venn, and others—great and esteemed Gospel ministers. He read a great deal—every good book he could lay hands on—including Whitefield's and Cennick's sermons. He inquired of his mother "who, where, what were the Methodists" and she directed him to a person who took him to Wednesbury to hear them. He continues:

I soon found this was not the Church—but it was better. The people were so devout. . . the preacher had no prayer-book, and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text, and had no sermon-book: thought I, this is wonderful indeed! It is certainly a strange way, but the best way. He talked about confidence, assurance, &c.,—of which all my flights and hopes fell short. I had no deep convictions, nor had I committed any deep known sins . . . yet I knew myself to be in a state of unbelief. On a certain time, when we were praying in my father's barn, I believe the Lord pardoned my sins, and justified my soul; but my companions reasoned me out of this belief . . . [I] gave up my confidence, and that for months; yet I was happy; free from guilt and fear, and had power over sin, and felt great inward joy. . . I then held meetings frequently at my father's house, exhorting the people there, as also at Sutton-Colefield, and several souls professed to find peace through my labours. I met a class awhile at Bromwich-Heath, and met in band at Wednesbury. I had preached some months before I publicly appeared in the Methodist meeting houses. . . Behold me now a local preacher!—the humble and willing servant of any and every preacher that called on me by night or by day, being ready, with hasty steps, to go far and wide to do good, visiting Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire . . . preaching, generally, three, four, and five times a week, and at the same time pursuing my calling. I think when I was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age I gave myself up to God and his work, after acting as a local preacher near the space of five years.¹⁶⁰

Asbury, after serving for several years as a Local Preacher, was admitted to the British Conference in 1768. At the Conference of 1771, when nearing his twenty-sixth birthday, he volunteered for America. For half a year he had contemplated taking the step, and, he says, had laid the plan "before the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will, or to run before I was sent." He continues:

At the conference it was proposed that some preachers should go over to the American continent. I spoke my mind and made an offer of myself. It was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others, who judged I had a call.¹⁶¹

After a few farewell visits with friends he returned to Bristol and on September 4, accompanied by Richard Wright, sailed from a nearby port. His father evidently was not disposed to aid him in his adventure for God—for he arrived at Bristol penniless—but sympathetic friends supplied him with clothes and ten pounds in money. On the voyage he subjected himself to severe cross-examination as to his motive and purpose:

Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honour? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No: I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do. . . The people God owns in England, are the Methodists. The doctrines they preach, and the discipline they enforce, are, I believe, the purest of any people now in the world. The Lord has greatly blessed those doctrines and this discipline in the three kingdoms: they must therefore be pleasing to him. If God does not acknowledge me in America, I will soon return to England. I know my views are upright now: may they never be otherwise!¹⁶²

He never returned to England!

For fifty-four days and nights the ship sailed westward, much of the time buffeting contrary winds and heavy waves. Asbury had no bed, save for two blankets, and "found it hard to lodge on little more than boards." But the nearer he drew to the American shore the greater his confidence became that he was doing God's will and was not running before he was sent. On the fifty-fifth day he landed in Philadelphia, where he was directed to "the house of one Mr. Harris" who entertained him kindly and in the evening brought him "to a large church" where he met with a considerable congregation. Evidently he began preaching very soon, for on the tenth day after landing he wrote in his *Journal*: "I preached at Philadelphia my last sermon, before I set out for New-York."¹⁶³ On the way he preached at Burlington—his first preaching place in New Jersey—and on Staten Island. On Monday, November 13, he preached his first sermon in New York to a large congregation on I Cor. 2,2. "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." A week later he wrote in his *Journal*,* "I remain in York, though unsatisfied with our [Boardman and himself] being both in town together."¹⁶⁴ During the next five weeks he made a number of trips to communities in the surrounding area, preaching several times each at Westchester, West Farms, Eastchester, New Rochelle, and Rye. Already his administrative urge was finding expression:

Tuesday [November] 20 . . . I have not yet the thing which I seek—a circulation of preachers, to avoid partiality and popularity. However, I am fixed to the Methodist plan, and do what I do faithfully as to God.¹⁶⁵

His espousal of Wesley's plan of itinerating evidently aroused opposition, which filled him with disquietude, but did not move him. There was iron in his character.

I expect trouble is at hand. This I expected when I left England, and I am willing to suffer, yea, to die, sooner than betray so good a cause by any means. It will be a hard matter to stand against all opposition, as an iron pillar strong, and steadfast as a wall of brass: but through Christ strengthening me I can do all things.¹⁶⁶

Two days later, November 22, he returned to the subject, formulating in few words a declaration of purpose and principle in accord with which he shaped his career of forty crowded years in America. He began by saying that he was in trouble and that more trouble was at hand, for he had determined "to make a stand against all partiality," by which we assume he meant that so far as his influence and authority went he would make no exceptions to Wesley's rule that every preacher must travel a Circuit. He continued:

* "The dates in Asbury's *Journal* are many of them erroneous, and it is often difficult to ascertain his movements." (S. A. Seaman, *Annals of New York Methodism*, p. 59n.) Francis Asbury: "*Monday*, 5. [April, 1802] . . . I was presented with a new impression of my journal; it is very incorrect: had I had an opportunity before it was put to press, I should have altered and expunged many things; the inaccuracies of grammar, and imperfections of composition incident to the hasty notices of a manuscript journal are preserved in the printed copy."—*Op. cit.*, III, 59.

I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear, but his displeasure. . . . I am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches: nor will I ever fear (the Lord helping me) the face of man, or know any man after the flesh, if I beg my bread from door to door; but whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul.¹⁶⁷

From December 1 to April 2 he made New York the center of his operations, although he was constantly on the move (except when incapacitated by illness), preaching almost every day and frequently two or three times a day. He mentions preaching at various times at Westchester, West Farms, Eastchester, New Rochelle, Rye, "Mairnock" (Mamaroneck), New City Island, "P's Manor" (Pelham Manor). On April 2, 1772, in Philadelphia, he met Boardman who informed him of his plan that he (Asbury) should stay "three months in Philadelphia." He adds, "With this I was well pleased." But "staying" in Philadelphia did not mean to Asbury shutting himself up in the city. During this quarter (April 2–July 20) if his *Journal* is assumed to be a complete record—which it is not—he preached a total of thirty sermons in Philadelphia and in addition preached once each in Chester, New Castle, Wilmington, Delaware, and Manta Creek; and three times in Burlington, New Jersey, five in Trenton, four in New Mills, three in Greenwich, three in Gloucester, and seventeen times at unidentified places such as "a friend's house," under the jail wall," "in the field," and "in the country," seventy-one in all. Every Sunday he was in Philadelphia, going out from thence during the week, usually returning on Friday for an evening preaching service.¹⁶⁸

On Monday, July 20, he records meeting "brother S. [?] from New-York" who informed him that for the next quarter he was to go to New York, "which was what I did not expect; but feel myself quite easy, not being fixed in any place."¹⁶⁹ Before the quarter in New York was ended he had received Wesley's letter appointing him as General Assistant, superseding Boardman in the supervisory relationship to the preachers and Societies.¹⁷⁰

From this point on to trace Asbury's course in detailed order would require nothing less than a chronological history of Methodism in America to the day of his death—so intimately and completely were his life and labors tied in to every phase of the ongoing Movement.

True, Asbury's appointment as General Assistant was soon annulled by Wesley by his designation of Thomas Rankin for the office. But this was merely a temporary setback and, if anything, deepened Asbury's basic purpose and resolution. He had come to America with a spiritual empire in his brain and he was not to be turned aside. He was to be, under God, the greatest creative force in the development of early American Methodism. His vision, his spirit of sacrifice, his humility, his peculiar combination of democratic temper and autocratic will, his contempt of physical obstacles, his dogged determination, and his indefatigable industry matched the need of the times in a wholly

unique way. Not John Wesley himself with "his despotic temper and his high-church and Tory principles" could have guided the Methodist Movement forward and assured its progress as did Francis Asbury. "It may reasonably be doubted," says Leonard Woolsey Bacon, eminent Church historian, "whether any [other] one man, from the founding of the Church in America until now, has achieved so much in the visible and traceable results of his work."¹⁷¹

Concerning Richard Wright, the records are strangely silent. Asbury, Jesse Lee, and Nathan Bangs make almost no mention of him. As a missionary he was a short candle, quickly burned out. He was young and inexperienced—having been a Travelling Preacher in England for only one year, and lacked the staying qualities essential for the task. He was present at the first Conference and was appointed to Norfolk, Virginia.¹⁷² His name does not again appear in the *Minutes*.

At the 1772 British Conference no additional appointments for America were made, but at the twenty-ninth Conference, held in London, beginning August 3, 1773, two new recruits were recorded, Thomas Rankin, whom Wesley designated as "General Assistant" or "General Superintendent of the Societies in America," and George Shadford—both men of outstanding qualities of leadership—who were to render significant service during the difficult and trying years just ahead.¹⁷³ They had been given their appointments in advance of the meeting of Conference and together sailed from Bristol on April 9, landing "opposite Chester, about sixteen miles below Philadelphia" late in the evening of June 1.¹⁷⁴

Thomas Rankin (1738–1810) was one of the comparatively few Scotchmen among Wesley's itinerants. He was a mature and experienced preacher—at this time having been a Traveling Preacher for eleven years—a strict disciplinarian, and one of the most energetic and thoroughly trusted of the British itinerants. Wesley was especially fond of him, habitually addressing him as "Dear Tommy." His stiffness and severity, together with his distaste for the freedom and unconventionality of colonial manners, were somewhat against him in his contacts with both preachers and lay people. As time went on even Asbury found it increasingly difficult to bear with him.

Boardman and Pilmoor had written to Wesley, complaining of Asbury's measures to enforce Wesleyan policy and discipline. Laymen also had sent complaints, and Thomas Webb—at that time in England—acquainted Wesley with details of the situation. Asbury himself had written telling of the difficulty he was having—possibly even asking that someone with more authority be sent to take over the administration of discipline. Strawbridge was inclined to follow an independent course and was not disposed to be amenable to a man much younger than himself. Asbury also doubtless feared, as he had

reason to fear, that unless developing trends were promptly corrected, Methodism in America might develop the settled pastorate, fall back into the comfortable forms and methods of the Established Church, and fail to reach the unshepherded masses of the country. Recognizing that the situation called for a firm and experienced hand, Wesley decided to avail himself of Rankin's willingness to go to America as a missionary, and clothed him with authority greater than had been vested in either Boardman or Asbury. Having been apprised in advance of the situation and expecting to find license and deviation from the Wesleyan established order, but unacquainted with the temper of the times in America, Rankin undertook to enforce by authority what might have been more effectually achieved by democratic conference and majority decision.

At the first Annual Conference,* convened soon after his arrival, Rankin assigned himself to New York, "to change in four months" with George Shadford, who was assigned to Philadelphia. Asbury was assigned to Baltimore along with Robert Strawbridge and two other preachers. Concerning Rankin's appointment Asbury two days later stated that some dissatisfied members in New York threatened to shut the church door against him (Rankin): "no doubt but the Lord will bring all their evil deeds to light."¹⁷⁵ During this Conference year Rankin seems to have devoted his time principally to the Societies at New York and Philadelphia. Of four Quarterly Meetings held in Maryland, Rankin was present at one only, Asbury presiding at the others. At the first, held on August 2, 1773, Asbury records:

After our temporal business was done, I read a part of our minutes [the *Minutes*, presumably, of the first Annual Conference] to see if brother S[trawbridge] would conform; but he appeared to be inflexible. He would not administer the ordinances under our direction at all. Many things were said on the subject; and a few of the people took part with him.¹⁷⁶

The refusal of Strawbridge to submit to the rule of Conference was tantamount to a break between him and the Methodist Societies. His name is missing from the 1774 *Minutes* but reappears for the last time in 1775 when he was appointed along with William Watters to the Frederick (Maryland) Circuit.¹⁷⁷ He continued to preach at intervals, making his own appointments, and when the work was threatened with disruption by the vicissitudes of war, assumed pastoral care of some of the Societies. In the meantime he had removed to a farm in the upper part of Baltimore County, made available to him free of rent by his steadfast friend Captain Charles Ridgely. He died in 1781, his funeral sermon being preached by one of his sons in the Gospel, the Rev. Richard Owen, in the open air, to a great throng, "under a tree at the northwest corner of the house."¹⁷⁸ His death brought this ungenerous comment from Asbury, to whom ecclesiastical irregularity was a venial sin:

* The term "Annual Conference" is used here and on following pages in the sense of yearly assemblies of the preachers. The "Annual Conference" in the technical Disciplinary sense did not exist prior to the General Conference of 1792. See p. 160, and II, ch. IV.

He is now no more: upon the whole I am inclined to think the Lord took him away in judgment because he was in a way to do hurt to his cause; and that he saved him in mercy, because from his death-bed conversation he appears to have had hope in his end.¹⁷⁹

If a man is to be judged by the fruit of his labor, Robert Strawbridge served the cause of God with as much effectiveness up to the time of his death, as any of the early preachers of Methodism. The personal influence of none covered a wider field or vitally affected more people than his. At the time of his death approximately four-fifths of all members of Methodist Societies were in Maryland and to the south where his influence extended.¹⁸⁰

Serious tension between Rankin and Asbury was in evidence at the second Annual Conference which opened on May 25, 1774, in Philadelphia. Asbury's account is restrained but it shows clearly how deeply he was affected:

Our conference began. The overbearing spirit of a certain person had excited my fears. My judgment was stubbornly opposed for a while, and at last submitted to. . . . Our conference was attended with great power; and, all things considered, with great harmony. . . . My lot was to go to [New] York. My body and mind have been much fatigued during the time of this conference. And if I were not deeply conscious of the truth and goodness of the cause in which I am engaged, I should by no means stay here.¹⁸¹

It was specified that Asbury in New York and Rankin in Philadelphia were to change in three months, the others "to change at the end of six months." Asbury was uneasy of spirit. After four months in New York he records that preaching or exhorting every day and twice on "the Lord's day," besides Society Meetings, "seems to be too much for both the people and the preacher," but for some reason he was strongly averse to going to Philadelphia. His moods alternated between "great peace" and seasons of deep dejection. He was plagued by physical disorders, at times so serious that his friends decided to write to Rankin, requesting that he might be permitted to continue "in New York and the country adjacent," as more healthful than "the low countries."¹⁸² Friends at Baltimore wanted him to come there. Rankin was inflexible. He had assigned Asbury to Philadelphia and to Philadelphia he must go. Finally, the issue between them was joined, Asbury deciding to appeal to Wesley. He wrote in his *Journal*:

Lord's Day [Dec.] 4 . . . I spoke my mind to Mr. R[ankin], but we did not agree in judgment. And it appeared to me, that to make any attempt to go to Baltimore would be all in vain. . . . *Tuesday*, 6 . . . wrote a letter to Mr. Wesley, which I read to Mr. R[ankin], that he might see I intended no guile or secret dealings. It is somewhat grievous that he should prevent my going to Baltimore, after being acquainted with my engagements, and the importunities of my friends there.¹⁸³

The fact is that Asbury was finding his own medicine bitter. It was much easier to make a program for others than to submit to a program made by

another for him. He might have known that his letter to Wesley would be promptly followed by Rankin's also writing, and that Wesley would stand by his duly commissioned representative. When the answers came they were not to Asbury's liking. To Rankin, Wesley wrote under date of March 1, 1775:

As soon as possible you must come to a full and clear explanation . . . with Brother Asbury (if he is recovered). . . . But I advise Brother Asbury to return to England the first opportunity.¹⁸⁴

How severe Asbury's inner struggle was is indicated by the fact that he both harbored a thought of "an alteration in the affairs of . . . [Methodist] Church-government" and the possibility of leaving America. On February 22 he wrote in his *Journal*:

I received a letter from Miss G. at Antigua* . . . and as there are about three hundred members in society, she entreats me to go and labor amongst them. And as Mr. Wesley has given his consent, I feel inclined to go. . . .¹⁸⁵

But this was merely temporary impulse.

Wesley evidently was uneasy over the turn affairs had taken, for a few weeks later (April 21) he again wrote Rankin a letter in which he referred to Asbury's suggestion of going to Antigua:

Brother Asbury has sent me a few lines, and I thank him for them. But I do not advise him to go to Antigua. Let him come home without delay.¹⁸⁶

And yet again on May 19, he wrote:

I doubt not but Brother Asbury and you will part friends: I shall hope to see him at the [British] Conference. He is quite an upright man. I apprehend he will go through his work more cheerfully when he is within a little distance from me.¹⁸⁷

Meanwhile, Baltimore friends continued their importunities; Asbury decided that it was his "duty to go to Baltimore" and, finally, at the end of February, before Rankin had reply to his letter to Wesley, he "packed up his clothes" and departed. Apparently he had quite forgotten his resolution against "partiality and popularity," accepting the gracious hospitality of Baltimore friends as balm for his aggrieved spirit:

Sister D. has treated me with all the tenderness of a mother towards a son. . . . my heart was greatly refreshed at the sight of my spiritual children and kind friends, for whose welfare my soul had travailed both present and absent.¹⁸⁸

Though Rankin's authority had been defied, he was not thwarted. When the third Conference met, a few weeks later (May 17, 1775), Asbury was as-

* In 1759, Nathaniel Gilbert, speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua, and a zealous Methodist layman, had begun religious work among the Negroes. In 1777, John Baxter, a Methodist shipwright of Chatham, England, had emigrated to Antigua and procured employment at the royal dockyard, chiefly with the idea of engaging in lay missionary work. He found there the Methodist Societies left by Gilbert. He not only preached to them but began Christian work also in St. Vincent's and St. Christopher's—nearby islands.—See W. T. A. Barber, *New History of Methodism*, H. B. Workman, W. G. Townsend, and G. Eayrs, Eds., II, 286ff.

signed to Norfolk, Virginia. Specific directions were set down governing the changing of other preachers—some quarterly, others at the end of six months.

Meanwhile, difficulties other than those of Church order and discipline were increasing. Rankin shared fully Wesley's point of view concerning rebellion against the King's authority and although he did not openly condemn the colonists' acts of resistance to the oppressive measures of government, his sentiments were well known and became increasingly distasteful to colonial Methodists. In August, 1775, he informed Asbury that he had "deliberately concluded it would be best to return to England." As for himself Asbury had no such intention and so informed Rankin:

. . . I can by no means agree to leave such a field for gathering souls to Christ, as we have in America. It would be an eternal dishonour to the Methodists, that we should all leave three thousand souls, who desire to commit themselves to our care; neither is it the part of a good shepherd to leave his flock in time of danger: therefore, I am determined, by the grace of God, not to leave them, let the consequence be what it may.¹⁸⁹

A few days later Rankin notified Asbury of "a change in his intention of returning to England." Had Asbury's courageous stand strengthened his missionary resolution? We do not know. But complications caused by the wide spread of warfare steadily grew more serious and eighteen months later, at the Conference of 1777, he announced his final intention to withdraw. Soon after, about the middle of September, he departed for England.¹⁹⁰

George Shadford (1739–1816) differed widely from Rankin in personality and gifts. He was admitted on trial at the British Conference of 1768; admitted to the Traveling Connection in 1769; and in 1772 was persuaded by Captain Thomas Webb to volunteer for missionary service in America.¹⁹¹ Unfortunately, specific information concerning his missionary ministry in America is scant but enough is known to evidence his great effectiveness as an evangelist. He was winsome, deeply in earnest, and skilled in bringing men and women to decision.* In 1773 he was appointed to Philadelphia, to change in four months to New York; in 1774 to Baltimore; in 1775 to the Brunswick Circuit, where his evangelistic success was so great that the rule limiting appointments to one year was disregarded and he was reappointed for a second year. In 1777 he was sent again to Baltimore but as he could not bring himself to renounce allegiance to Great Britain, he withdrew in March, 1778, and returned to England. He left America universally beloved by the Methodist people.¹⁹²

* John Riles: "His abilities as a Preacher were not above mediocrity; yet he was a very useful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord: in illustrating the doctrines of the Gospel, he was simple, plain and clear. His discourses, though not laboured, were methodical, full of scriptural phraseology, delivered with pathos, and accompanied with the blessing of God. He did not perplex his hearers with abstruse reasoning, and metaphysical distinctions, but aimed to feed them with the bread of life. . . ."—*The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, Thos. Jackson, Ed., III, 217f.

At the thirty-first British Conference held at Bristol, beginning on August 9, 1774, two more volunteers were appointed to America, James Dempster and Martin Rodda.¹⁹³ No additional appointments were made at the Conference of 1775 and before the 1776 Conference was held the Declaration of Independence had proclaimed the American colonies free and independent.

James Dempster (? -1803) was a Scotch Presbyterian and a graduate of the University of Edinburgh. He had served ten years as a Traveling Preacher. Like Thomas Rankin he had the complete confidence of Wesley. He was appointed by the Conference of 1775 to New York, where he was well received by the people. Soon, however, he was overtaken by illness and before the end of the year retired from the work. Later he joined the Presbyterian Church and became pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Florida, New York, where he served acceptably for almost thirty years.¹⁹⁴

Martin Rodda proved to be a liability rather than an asset to the Methodist cause. He was appointed at the Conference of 1775 to Baltimore and the following year to the Frederick Circuit.¹⁹⁵ He was a pronounced Royalist and took an active part in circulating over his Circuit in Delaware the King's proclamation against the American patriots. Word of this reaching the Revolutionary troops, he was compelled to flee from the country. His conduct caused no end of difficulty for his brethren in the ministry, rendering them all more or less suspect.

By 1778 the overseas extension of British Methodism had come to an end. No new appointments had been made after the Conference of 1775. Of the ten missionaries named in the *Minutes* of the British Conferences of 1769-74 as appointed to America six had returned to England; one had died; one had retired; one had become a Presbyterian minister; and one had dropped from view. Francis Asbury was in temporary seclusion. On the whole, considering the extreme difficulties with which they had been beset, the record they had made was honorable and creditable.* They had given form and substance to what previous to their coming had been an inchoate movement. They had given to it system and order. They had given to it a distinctly different and wider impulse, expanding it far beyond the cities and the one regional community in which it had taken root. Under their leadership native American preachers had been recruited and the Movement had taken on more of an indigenous character.

As missionaries, the chief business of the Wesleyan preachers was preaching the Gospel and as evangelists they were remarkably successful. There are

* Concerning the missionaries Findlay says: "... their record strictly belongs to the history of Wesleyan Missions. . . . [They] were our earliest Native Missionaries and a noble pattern to all the rest. . . . No more memorable names stand in that sacred register [the British *Minutes* of Conference]. From their memorials it would not be difficult to extract a series of biographies fully matching the *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*."—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 245f.

no authentic statistics of membership of the Methodist Societies for 1769. The British *Minutes* for 1771, in answer to the question "What numbers are in the Society?" report "... America, 316."¹⁹⁶ However, this must be an understatement since Asbury says there were about 300 members in New York, 250 in Philadelphia, and a few in New Jersey.¹⁹⁷ Why he entirely omitted Maryland, where Strawbridge had been energetically preaching and enrolling members in Classes, we do not know. Probably the total number was somewhat in excess of six hundred. The American *Minutes* for 1777¹⁹⁸ report 6,968 members*—certainly a phenomenal growth for eight troubled years.

METHODISTS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Wesley had expressly warned his missionaries against taking any part in political affairs in America. As the political situation became more tense he sensed the danger to the Methodist cause should the missionaries so much as express sympathy with the British government, and under date of March 1, 1775, addressed to them a letter of earnest counsel:

MY DEAR BRETHREN,—You were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peacemakers: to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side. . . . Mark all those that would set one against the other. Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance; rather ferret them out, and drag them into open day.¹⁹⁹

It is not strange that the Methodist preachers were in general regarded with suspicion by the patriots. In all the colonies there was division among the people. John Adams at the close of the war declared that in his opinion more than a third part of the whole population had been opposed to the Revolution. Two-thirds of all property in New York was believed to be held by Tories. In some of the Southern colonies they were estimated to form nearly one-half of the population. There was no section of the country in which they were not largely represented.²⁰⁰ This being the case all who did not openly ally themselves with the patriot cause were more or less suspect. This was the more true of those who had recently arrived from England.

In the second place most of the Church of England clergy were Tories, even those who were of colonial ancestry and graduates of American colleges. In Virginia by the close of the war almost three-fourths of the Anglican clergy

* Thomas Rankin's observation of the state of Methodism at the time he left for England is of interest: "At our little Conference in Philadelphia, in July, 1773, we had about a thousand in the different societies, and six or seven preachers: and in May, 1777, we had forty preachers in the different circuits, and about seven thousand members in the societies; besides many hundreds of Negroes, who were convinced of sin, and many of them happy in the love of God. Were it not for the civil war, I have reason to believe the work of God would have flourished in a more abundant manner, as both rich and poor gladly embraced the truths of the Gospel, and received the preachers with open arms." —Quoted by Samuel Drew in *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke* . . . , p. 53.

had left their parishes²⁰¹—some having returned to England and others having become refugees. In New York the proportion of Tories was probably about the same; in Pennsylvania and other sections it was much less. As the affiliation of the Methodist Societies with the Church of England was generally known it was taken for granted that allegiance of ministers and lay people would extend to the British government.²⁰² Antagonism and even persecution naturally followed.

As was the case with other religious groups, some of the leading Methodist laymen were identified with the Loyalists. This was particularly true of New York. Throughout the considerable period of occupation of New York by the British troops, while other churches were burned or taken over by the British army for military purposes, Wesley Chapel was protected and was used on Sunday evenings for Methodist services. These facts—possibly quite as much as anything said or done by the preachers—created trouble for the Methodists.

Without question some of the preachers*—of whom Martin Rodda was the outstanding example—were outspoken in advocacy of British rule and exerted their influence in inciting disaffection toward the American cause.²⁰³ Most of them were of British birth; they had grown to manhood in a period when a tradition of loyalty had been so strongly developed that allegiance to the Crown had become one of the chief tests of orthodoxy in the Church of England; they had been commissioned by a leader whose British bias was so strong that at this very time he was saying that he would as soon associate with a drunkard or a whoremonger as with rebels,²⁰⁴ and it was inevitable that some, at least, as a part of their loyalty to him should share his British patriotism. His spoken and written words to which he gave utterance in England sounded louder in their ears than his written exhortation to non-partisanship.

In the years preceding organized action Wesley had shown a sympathetic understanding of the lot of the colonists and was critical of the intolerance and lack of understanding shown by Government. On June 15, 1775, he had written a letter to Lord North, the British premier, sending a copy to Lord Dartmouth, the Colonial Secretary, protesting that

an oppressed people asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow. But . . . waiving all considerations of right and wrong, I ask, Is it common sense to use force toward the Americans? . . . these men will not be frightened. And it seems they will not be conquered so easily as was at first imagined. They will probably dispute every inch of ground, and, if they die, die sword in hand.²⁰⁵

* Abel Stevens' characterization in his *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (I, 265) that the entire group "of what are called Wesley's American missionaries, seem to have been unfortunate in their relations to their American brethren" seems to me to be an overstatement.

Then came the organization of an American army and the choice of Washington as commander-in-chief. War was declared by Britain. Wesley's attitude completely changed; he would not—could not—countenance war against King and government. In the fall of 1775 his *Calm Address to Our American Colonies* was published. "Since England was finally committed to the struggle, duty demanded that . . . loyalty should be uncompromising."²⁰⁶ There was little that was original in the pamphlet since it was simply a reprint in slightly abridged and popularized form, under Wesley's name, of Samuel Johnson's political tract *Taxation No Tyranny*.^{*} But among the common people, with whom Wesley was in all probability the most widely known and influential public figure in England, the pamphlet produced a sensation. Over forty thousand copies were sold within a few weeks. The repercussion in America was so great that Methodists, realizing the effects it would have in intensifying antagonism, tried to prevent its circulation by burning all the copies they could procure.

With Wesley's missionaries the pamphlet could have no other effect than to undo all that his letter, counselling against a partisan attitude, had accomplished. He not only argued that the colonists in reality had no grievances and had been robbed of no rights—their revolt being not basically a struggle for freedom but simply an attempt to overthrow the monarchy—but grounded his argument and appeal in theology. Government, he contended, not only ought to be but is "a delegation . . . from God, for rulers are God's ministers, or delegates." On the basis of Paul's statement that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God"²⁰⁷ he held that there is no subordinate power in any nation but what is derived from the superior power therein, and all from God. Necessary political reforms could be brought about, Wesley believed, not by increasing the powers of the electorate—democracy was to him a hateful thing—but by regeneration of those entrusted with authority, a principle that had immense influence in the later history of Methodism. This position was familiar to Wesley's missionaries, especially to such theologically-minded men among them as Thomas Rankin, and must perforce have strongly influenced them. As the tensions and sufferings caused by war increased among the patriots, and the attitude of the preachers, influenced by Wesley, became increasingly pro-British, a virtual impasse was reached. No choice remained for the Loyalists but to return to England.

Some of the American-born preachers were pacifists, in this particular shar-

^{*} The charge made in England by Wesley's enemies that the *Calm Address* was flagrant plagiarism has been met by the dubious claim that a mutual understanding evidently existed between Samuel Johnson and Wesley. However, under date of Feb. 6, 1776, Johnson wrote: "I have thanks to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion." Further, he compared himself to the philosopher who "when he saw the rest of his audience slinking away from a lecture, refused to quit the chair as long as Plato stayed."

ing the Quaker conviction and attitude. Outstanding as representing pacifism was Freeborn Garrettson. His position may be stated in his own words:

From reading, my own reflection, and the teachings of the good Spirit, I was quite drawn away from a belief in the lawfulness of shedding human blood under the gospel dispensation, or at most it must be in an extreme case, touching which, at that time my mind was in doubt.²⁰⁸

The attitude of Jesse Lee toward war was similar, though perhaps somewhat less absolutist. Drafted in 1780 in the North Carolina militia he accompanied the army but refused to bear arms. In this he was inflexible, confinement in the guardhouse failing to move him. At length the commander offered him the alternative of serving as a teamster and this he consented to do, performing his duties faithfully in this capacity and becoming also a volunteer chaplain to the troops.²⁰⁹

To the military authorities pacifism was scarcely less anathema than British allegiance. In some sections of the country persecution of Methodist preachers, and to some extent of lay members of the Societies, became the order of the day. Some were fined; others publicly whipped; some imprisoned. In Maryland oppressive measures were specially severe, involving much hardship. On the Frederick Circuit Philip Gatch was waylaid by a mob while on his way to a preaching appointment and given a coat of tar and feathers. One of his eyes was permanently injured. In Queen Anne County Joseph Hartley was bonded in amount of £ 500. not to preach in the county, and in Talbot County was whipped and committed to prison.²¹⁰ Also in Queen Anne County Freeborn Garrettson was so severely beaten by one of the county judges that he fell from his horse and was nearly killed. In Dorchester he was committed to jail, and in the same county Caleb Pedicord was whipped and severely injured.²¹¹

The case of Francis Asbury was essentially different, on the one hand from that of Rankin, and on the other from that of the American-born preachers. Only by dissimulation could Rankin have pretended to be friendly to the Revolutionary cause. Not so with Asbury. Although a native of England and a British subject, he recognized the justice of the colonists' cause; had the insight to perceive its strength; and faith to believe that, the cause being just, the revolutionaries would certainly win.* When in 1777 he was challenged to swear allegiance to the recently established state of Maryland he refused because the declaration to which he was asked to subscribe contained terms ob-

* A significant British estimate of Asbury in his relation to the Revolution is that of Professor George G. Findlay: Asbury "recognized the justice of the insurgent cause, and saw in the despised 'rebels' the making of a noble nation. . . . With his candour and keen discernment, he appreciated the colonial point of view as his English colleagues failed to do, and bore himself, in true Wesleyan fashion, as the 'friend of all, the enemy of none.' From the outset he gave evidence of the tact and power of adaptation so often wanting to Britishers amongst strangers. . . ."—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 225f., 228.

jectionable to his conscience and in consequence he was expelled from the state. On June 20, 1776, he had been arrested near Baltimore and fined £ 5., he says, "for preaching the Gospel."²¹² From that time on he had been subjected to annoying petty persecution. But persecution could not compel him to leave America. He went to Delaware, where ministers of religion were not required to take the oath of allegiance. Here he continued to preach until suspicion and threats—he believed—made it unsafe for him to travel, when, early in March, 1778, he took refuge in the home of Judge Thomas White, a prominent magistrate and a Methodist. Pursuit followed him even into his place of asylum. Judge White was imprisoned on the sole charge of being a Methodist, and for a time Asbury sought concealment during daylight hours in the depths of a dreary swamp. For several weeks prudence dictated that he should not preach on Sunday, for him a sore trial—"dumb and silent Sabbaths," he called them. Friends who were convinced of his sincerity at length came to his defense, making it possible for him to become a citizen of Delaware without subscribing to the offensive oath. Thereafter he resumed preaching, making the state of Delaware his Circuit. Sometime during 1779 a letter to Rankin, intercepted and turned over to the military authorities, was found to contain such convincing evidence of his patriotism that the officers were persuaded of his loyalty and persecution ceased. In the *Minutes* of the 1777 and 1778 Conferences his name does not appear in the lists of appointments and in 1778 it is not even included in the list of "Assistants," but in 1779 it reappears both among the "Assistants" and in the appointments.²¹³

From the beginning of the war there were Methodists, both ministers and laymen, who associated themselves with the struggle for independence by active participation in the war. Thomas Ware,* later one of the most honored and influential of the Methodist preachers, enlisted as a youth of eighteen, in 1776. In his autobiography he gives a brief statement of his reasons:

The cause I held to be just . . . the principles for which we were contending . . . worth risking life for. Our example would be followed by others, and tyranny and oppression would be overthrown throughout the world . . . with the views I entertained of the justness of our cause in the sight of Heaven, I could not doubt, and resolved for one on liberty or death.²¹⁴

As the Revolution gained momentum, the demand for religious liberty—the complete separation of Church and State and the repeal of all laws giving

* Thomas Ware (1758–1842), a native of New Jersey, converted at twenty-two years of age, in 1783 was called by Asbury to assist the preacher on the Dover Circuit (Del.), beginning a long and distinguished career in the itinerancy. In 1787 he volunteered to go as a missionary to Tennessee, his appointment being recorded in the *Minutes* as "Nollechuckie," and the following year as "New-River." In 1791 he was appointed to Wilmington (Del.), during the intervening years having traveled over a large part of Tennessee and North Carolina, making many converts. For one quadrennium (1812–16), by election of General Conference, he was Assistant Book Agent. In 1825 he became supernumerary, but continued to supply Salem Station in the West Jersey District until 1840, when he was superannuated. He died in Salem, N. J., March 11, 1842, having been for years one of the oldest Traveling Preachers in the Church.—*Gen'l Minutes*, III, 252; Matthew Simpson, Ed., *Cyclopædia of Methodism* (Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1878), p. 897.

special privileges or precedence to any one religious institution—became an integral part of the independence movement. From all parts of the state petitions poured into the Virginia Assembly. One, circulated by the Baptists, had 10,000 signatures. The Anglicans as a group strongly opposed disestablishment and at first large numbers of Methodists stood with them. In 1776 a Methodist petition was presented, signed by George Shadford “in Behalf of the whole Body of the people commonly called Methodists in Virginia, consisting of near, if not altogether, three thousand members,” stating that they wished to disassociate themselves from “common dissenters” and that this term does not properly apply to them since they are a religious society in communion with the Church of England and “do all in . . . [their] power . . . to support the said church.” They contended that “very bad consequences would arise from the abolishment of the establishment,” and prayed that “as the Church of England ever hath been, so it may ever continue to be Established.”²¹⁵ The departure of the British missionaries and the rapid development of the spirit of independence during the war years loosened the bonds of attachment of many Methodists to the Church of England and when three years had passed the Methodists joined with the Baptists in favoring Jefferson’s Bill for the Establishment of Religious Liberty in Virginia (1779).²¹⁶

PATTERN OF GROWTH

One of the great services rendered by the British missionaries in America, as has been stated, consisted in regularizing the Methodist Societies: they gave American Methodism a pattern of growth that determined the form of its future development. They brought connectionalism into widely separated beginnings. The purely local character of the Societies at New York and in Maryland ended with the coming of Robert Williams, John King, and Francis Asbury. Wesley had no other thought or expectation than that Methodism in America would develop in accordance with the blueprint he had wrought out in Great Britain: the itinerancy, a closely knit system of Classes, Bands, and Societies, with a highly centralized authoritative administration functioning through Annual Conferences composed exclusively of preachers—the complete cellular structure existing within the Church of England. Conditions of origin and environment in the colonies, so different from those of England, during the first few years threatened to prevent the development of this pattern. Thanks to the faithful, zealous work of Wesley’s missionaries—particularly that of Thomas Rankin*—the pattern was preserved. Without them, in all likelihood,

* As regards the contribution of Thomas Rankin I agree with the estimate of Bishop John J. Tigert: “I am inclined to a more favorable judgment of . . . Rankin and his administration than our historians generally. . . . His great services in the founding of American Methodism have scarcely been appreciated to the full. He . . . [administered] his high trust in the midst of ecclesiastical difficulties and political convulsions which would have speedily sent a weak man flying from his post. . . . He purified and consolidated the American societies, conforming them more closely to the English disciplinary model. . . .”—*Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism*, p. 92.

the Societies in New York City and in Maryland within a few years would have been absorbed by the previously existing, environing forms of American Protestantism.

In general the Church of England clergy in the colonies treated the Methodist missionaries with scant tolerance—scarcely, if any more, than Methodism had met with in England—limited as that was. Only one, so far as we have record, Devereux Jarratt of Virginia, extended generous appreciation and active cooperation. Among the few others who showed at least a tolerant attitude toward the Methodists were Charles Pettigrew of North Carolina and Uzal Ogden of New Jersey. Pettigrew, a native of Pennsylvania—the only Anglican clergyman who remained in North Carolina throughout the war—was a personal friend of Caleb B. Pedicord, attended some of the Methodist Conferences, and extended cordial hospitality to Methodist preachers—often entertaining them in his house.²¹⁷ Asbury records receipt of a letter, “with a sermon,” from “Mr. Ogden, a man of piety,” and hopes that he “will be of great service to the Methodist societies, and the cause of God in general.”²¹⁸ Uzal Ogden, at the time of writing, was rector of the Episcopal church at Newton, New Jersey. He pays tribute in his letter to the Methodist preachers with whom he had come in contact as men who “do honour to the cause they profess to serve”; states that he had given them such “countenance and advice” as he had deemed expedient; and expresses the hope that “they and their successors” may be the means of “turning many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.”²¹⁹ But these and a few other tolerant clergymen were exceptions. From the majority the Methodist itinerants met pronounced opposition, amounting in some instances to abuse and even persecution. William Watters tells of attending a Church of England service while on a round of Fairfax Circuit in Virginia in November, 1775. On a fast day, appointed by Congress, the rector preached on Romans 13. 1-2. The first part of his discourse consisted of what he called an explanation of the text; the second part, of an attack on the Methodists:

We were all in general, and the preachers in particular, declared to be a set of Tories, under a cloak of religion. That the preachers were sent here . . . to preach up passive obedience and non-resistance. That they pretended their desire for the salvation of the people . . . but money in his opinion was their real object. He concluded . . . by declaring that he would, if at the helm of our national affairs, make our nasty stinking carcasses pay for our pretended scruples of conscience.²²⁰

Of the ten preachers “stationed” at the 1773 Conference, only one—William Watters—was American-born. From this year on the number of itinerants steadily increased. At the Conference of 1774 nine additional preachers were admitted; in 1775, three; 1776, ten; 1777, fourteen; 1778, ten; 1779, seven; 1780, five; 1781, eight; 1782, seven; 1783, fourteen; 1784, eleven. In addition

to the missionaries appointed by the British Conference of which account has been given, others who presumably were immigrants from Britain—some of them Local Preachers—joined the itinerant ranks. Among the immigrants, names readily identified are Abraham Whitworth and Joseph Yearbry,* included within the ten appointees of 1773, Edward Dromgoole and Isaac Rolins, admitted on trial in 1774; and William Glendenning, admitted in 1775.

These early years include a notable company of native-born Americans—men who for many years were to have a fruitful ministry and exercise creative influence on the shaping of American Methodism. Among them were such men as Philip Gatch, admitted to Conference in full connection in 1774; Francis Poythress† and Freeborn Garrettson, admitted on trial in 1776; Caleb B. Pedicord‡ in 1777; and Henry Willis and James O'Kelly in 1778. In 1782 Jesse Lee, then twenty-four years of age, attended the Conference held at Ellis's Meeting House in Virginia. At the close of the Conference Asbury called to some of the preachers standing a little way off and said, "I am going to enlist brother Lee." One of them answered, "What bounty do you give?" Asbury replied, "Grace here and glory hereafter will be given if he is faithful." Asbury and some of the others talked with Lee but, though manifestly deeply concerned, he did not then consent. The next year (1783) he was received on trial.²²¹ Of the ninety-eight men admitted to Conference during the eleven years 1774 to 1784, inclusive, all who were American-born were from the South—the large majority natives of Maryland or Virginia.

Between 1769 and the arrival of Thomas Rankin in 1773 the only official meetings other than those of the individual Societies were "Quarterly Conferences." The first of these of which any detailed record exists was held at J. Presbury's, on the western shore of Maryland, on December 23, 1772, fourteen months after Asbury's arrival in America. Asbury says that it was the second held at Presbury's. How many were held between December, 1772, and July, 1773, is unknown. Concerning their character Stevens says:

These were held mostly in obscure places, their sessions occupying but a day or

* Abraham Whitworth was an Englishman who had been associated with Thomas Webb and Francis Asbury in labors in New Jersey in 1772. Joseph Yearbry—a volunteer Local Preacher—came to America at the same time as Rankin and Shadford. Both were admitted into full connection at the 1774 Conference. Yearbry was in the Traveling Connection for two years only: in 1773 appointed to Baltimore Circuit; in 1774 to Chester Circuit, after which he disappears from the record. Whitworth also was appointed to Kent (Md.) Circuit, where after two months he "fell into sin" and was expelled from the Connection. (J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, pp. 128f.) Later he joined the British army to fight against the colonists and is believed to have been killed in action.

† Francis Poythress (1732-1810), a Virginian, after some years of highly effective service on eastern Circuits, in 1788 was appointed Presiding Elder in Kentucky, serving for twelve years. "Few of the early itinerants," says Stevens, "did more to lay the foundations of the Church both east and west of the mountains." His mind became deranged in 1801. Thereafter his name does not appear in the *Gen'l Minutes*. For particulars of his career see A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, I, 299; II, 22, 135; III, 281, 289, 299; IV, 14, 109ff., 161.

‡ Caleb B. Pedicord (?-1785), a native of Maryland, was admitted on trial in 1777. During his brief ministry—traveling Circuits in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and Virginia—he made a profound impression by his saintliness of character and the emotional power of his preaching. He possessed, according to the estimate of John Lednum, "everything that could be desired in a Methodist preacher."—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 8, 23; J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

two, their members consisting of a few Itinerants, Local Preachers, Exhorters, and subordinate officials, gathered from neighboring circuits, and their records so slight, or deemed so unimportant, that I am not aware that an official copy of any of them remains.²²²

Since the proceedings of the Presbury Quarterly Conference show it to have been definitely the forerunner of the Annual Conference, Asbury's account is of historical importance. "Many people attended, and several friends came from many miles." After Asbury had preached, the following "propositions" were considered:

1. What are our collections? We found them sufficient to defray our expenses.
2. How are the preachers stationed? Brother S[trawbridge] and brother O. in Frederick County. Brother K[ing], brother W[illiams] and I. R., on the other side of the bay, and myself in Baltimore.
3. Shall we be strict in our society meetings, and not admit strangers? Agreed.
4. Shall we drop preaching in the day-time through the week? Not agreed to.
5. Will the people be contented without our administering the sacrament? J. K[ing] was neuter; brother S[trawbridge] pleaded much for the ordinances; and so did the people, who appeared to be much biased by him. I told them I would not agree to it at that time, and insisted on our abiding by our rules. But Mr. B[oardman] had given them their way at the quarterly meeting held here before, and I was obliged to connive at some things for the sake of peace.
6. Shall we make collections weekly, to pay the preachers' board and expenses? This was not agreed to. We then inquired into the moral characters of the preachers and exhorters. Only one exhorter was found . . . doubtful, and we have great hopes of him. Brother S[trawbridge] received £ 8 quarterage; brother K[ing] and myself £ 6 each. Great love subsisted among us in this meeting, and we parted in peace.²²³

Stevens places the early Quarterly Conferences in the category "of judicatories or synods." The question, "How are the preachers stationed?" was carried over in identical form to the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church.²²⁴ It is to be noted that at these Quarterly Conferences, in which the appointments of the preachers were made, lay officials of the Circuits attended and participated. If this precedent had ruled in the first Annual Conference and in the organization of the Church much of the dissension of succeeding years, and possibly the division of 1828, would have been averted.

What has come to be known in Methodist history as the first Annual Conference was convened by Thomas Rankin in St. George's Church, Philadelphia. The exact date is uncertain.* The proceedings are entitled *Minutes of*

* The *General Minutes* (I, 5) give the date of the Conference as "June, 1773." In his fragmentary *Journal*, entitled *The Life of Mr. Thomas Rankin, Written by Himself*, in *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers* . . . , Thomas Jackson, Ed., Rankin says: "Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, we had our first little Conference." This undated sentence follows a paragraph dated July 4. If the reference is to the preceding week, the date of the Conference was June 20-July 2. But the reference may be to a later week. Under date of "*Wednesday* [July] 14, Asbury says, "Our general conference began. . . ." (*Journal*, I, 80.) With this, Jesse Lee's statement agrees: ". . . on the 14th of July, 1773, the first conference that was ever held in America, began in Philadelphia." (*Op. cit.*, p. 45.) Nathan Bangs says the Conference was convened on July 4 (*op. cit.*, I, 80.) But as July 4, 1773, was a Sunday, the statement is obviously erroneous. William Watters (*A Short Account of the Christian Experience* . . . of William Watters, p. 30) says "June." J. B. Wakeley (*op. cit.*, p. 240) says the Conference met July 16. We accept Asbury's and Lee's statement of July 14-16 as correct.

Some Conversations between the Preachers in Connexion with the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, this same title being used for succeeding Annual Conferences up to and including April-May, 1784. The group was small. Rankin says, "There were present seven Preachers, besides brothers Boardman and Pilmore, who were to return to England."²²⁵ If in the seven Rankin did not include himself, the total number present was at least ten—the identical number present at Wesley's first Conference in England, in 1744. John Lednum names the attendants: Thomas Rankin, Francis Asbury, Richard Wright, George Shadford, John King, Thomas Webb, Abraham Whitworth, and Joseph Yearbry.²²⁶ Strangely, Lednum omits the name of William Watters, who states definitely that he attended.²²⁷ If Lednum's list is otherwise correct, the total number was not ten, but eleven. Watters was the only American-born preacher present. No laymen were in attendance. Even more strange—the two men with whose activities the Conference had most to do, Robert Strawbridge and Robert Williams, also were not present. Were they not invited? We should like to know. The absence of Strawbridge, some say, is accounted for by the fact that he was a Local Preacher only. But so were Thomas Webb, Abraham Whitworth, and Joseph Yearbry—all of whom were present.

Rankin's comment on the spirit of the Conference was wholly favorable, stating that the preachers were stationed in the best manner possible and that all present "parted in love; and also with a full resolution to spread genuine Methodism, in public and private, with all our might."²²⁸

Asbury did not arrive until the second day of the Conference. His brief comment is in somewhat different tone:

[I] did not find such perfect harmony as I could wish for. . . . It was also found that money had been wasted, improper leaders appointed, and many of our rules broken.²²⁹

In his account Rankin registered his disappointment in the number of members in the Societies. From "the wonderful accounts" he had heard in England and on shipboard he had been led to think that some thousands had been awakened and had joined the Methodist Societies as members, whereas a checkup of all the Societies revealed that members "did not exceed one thousand one hundred and sixty," and of these it developed that some "were not closely united."

The object of the three-day Conference was clearly disciplinary; it was for the purpose of bringing the Societies into accord with Wesleyan practice that Rankin had been sent to America. Reports had reached Wesley that things were getting out of hand and he had determined that Methodist discipline in America should be brought strictly into line with that in Great Britain. Rankin found that conditions were as they had been described:

Indeed our discipline was not properly attended to, except at Philadelphia and New-York; and even in those places it was upon the decline.²³⁰

The form of the questions asked and the rules "agreed to" suggest probability of their having been dictated by Wesley. The three "queries" proposed "to every preacher" and the answers recorded were:

1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley, and that Conference to extend to the preachers and people in America as well as in Great Britain and Ireland? *Ans.* Yes.

2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the Minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labour in the connection with Mr. Wesley in America? *Ans.* Yes.

3. If so, does it not follow that if any preachers deviate from the Minutes* we can have no fellowship with them till they change their conduct? *Ans.* Yes.

Immediately following are six "rules," "agreed to by all the preachers present." Rules 4 and 5 as stated earlier, were levelled at Robert Williams. Rules 1 and 2 were directed at Robert Strawbridge, and read as follows:

1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labour in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.

2. All the people among whom we labour to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church, and receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

Rule 3 provided that Love Feasts and Society meetings should be open to members only, except for attendance two or three times as a means of getting acquainted; and rule 6 that preachers who are "Assistants" must submit semi-annual reports to the General Assistant. Finally, six Circuits were mapped out—New York, Philadelphia, New Jersey, Baltimore, Norfolk, and Petersburg.²³¹

The second Annual Conference opened in Philadelphia on May 25, 1774.²³² The number "in Society" had nearly doubled (2,073); Circuits were increased to ten; preachers appointed to Circuits to seventeen. On Asbury's motion, with which Rankin was in full accord, itinerancy was enforced by the adoption of a rule providing that the preachers appointed to New York and Philadelphia should exchange quarterly and all others at the end of six months. A rule also was adopted requiring that formal action should be taken on the character of every preacher, a principle followed in Methodist Annual Conferences to this day. The original form of question was: *Are there any objections to any of the preachers?* and the answer recorded: "They were examined

* The third edition of Wesley's *Large Minutes* had been printed in 1770, superseding the first edition (1753) and the second edition (1763). It was doubtless the recent third edition which this first Conference by its action constituted the doctrinal and disciplinary basis of American Methodism. In it were the *Minutes* of the Leeds Conference of 1769, at which the preachers in accord with Wesley's suggestion bound themselves "to preach the old Methodist doctrines, and no other, contained in the Minutes of the Conferences," and to observe and enforce "the whole Methodist discipline, laid down in the said Minutes."

one by one." Provision was made for admission on trial, without fixing a specific period for trial; and for admission into full connection. Three other significant actions were taken: the first that every preacher received into full connection should "have the use and property of his horse," to be furnished by any Circuit minded to be generous; the second fixing the allowance of Traveling Preachers at £ 6., Pennsylvania currency per quarter, plus travel expense; and the third requiring a collection at Easter toward payment of the debts on the meeting houses, and "relieving the preachers in want."²³⁵ Rankin's comment on the Conference session was:

Every thing considered, we had reason to bless God for what he had done in about ten months. . . . We spoke our minds freely one to another in love; and whatever we thought would further the work we most cheerfully embraced it. We had . . . calls and openings into many fresh places. We stationed the Preachers as well as we could, and all seemed to be satisfied.²³⁴

The third Annual Conference met in Philadelphia on May 17, 1775, with the tocsins of war sounding on every hand. The whole country was aflame and Philadelphia was an armed camp. Nevertheless, by Asbury's testimony, the little company of Methodist preachers conferred together for three days "with great harmony and sweetness of temper." More than a thousand members had been added. The names of four itinerants of the preceding year are missing from the list of appointments—Joseph Yearbry, Abraham Whitworth, Philip Ebert, and Isaac Rollins—but others had come in to take the vacant places and nineteen preachers were "stationed." A "general fast" was ordered to be observed on July 18, "for the prosperity of the work, and for the peace of America."²³⁵

The fourth Annual Conference convened on May 21, 1776, this time in Baltimore. Asbury had been severely ill for ten days and, although he had made an heroic attempt to travel, had finally given up the attempt, feeling that if he continued the journey "it would be at the hazard of . . . [his] life."²³⁶ Five preachers were admitted into full connection and nine* admitted on trial.²³⁷ Freeborn Garrettson's record supplies important details on the procedure used in admitting preachers on trial:

I attended, passed through an examination, was admitted on trial, and my name was, for the first time, classed among the Methodists; I received of Mr. Rankin a written license.²³⁸

Preachers appointed to Circuits increased to twenty-four but there was a net increase of one only in the number of Circuits. Four new Circuits were added, three in Virginia—Fairfax, Hanover, and Pittsylvania—and one, called

* Jesse Lee says "eleven young preachers" were admitted on trial (*op. cit.*, p. 60). This may possibly be correct, although it is not entirely consistent with the *Minutes*. One name, not two—that of Adam Fornerdon—not included in the list of preachers admitted on trial, appears in the list of appointments. Inconsistencies in the *General Minutes* are numerous.

Carolina, in the state of North Carolina. But the two New Jersey Circuits were combined and Norfolk was discontinued—mute evidence of the disastrous effect of war. Military operations were heavy in New Jersey; and Norfolk, as well as New York City, was occupied by the British forces “which had so distressed the town that . . . [the Methodists] could not keep a preacher in that station.”²³⁹ Despite the fact that New Jersey reported a decrease of 150 in membership of the Societies, New York 78, and Philadelphia 53, a total net increase of 1,773 for the year was reported.

Before the set time had come for the fifth Annual Conference it was evident that prudential reasons forbade an attempt to meet in either Philadelphia or Baltimore. Accordingly the Conference convened in a comparatively obscure place—the Deer Creek Meeting House in Harford County, Maryland, on May 20, 1777. It is manifest Asbury’s stock as leader was rising and that in part, at least, by his own sanction and effort, for in advance of the stated session a preliminary meeting was held which bore all the earmarks of a caucus, at which he took the leading part.* At this meeting a draft of appointments was drawn up and agreed to; consent that “Mr. R.” (probably Rankin) should baptize was denied; decision was made to authorize a supervisory or administrative committee; and the question was considered of “the propriety of signing certificates avouching good conduct for such of the preachers as chose to go to Europe.”²⁴⁰ To this Asbury was averse. Discussion on these matters evidently was long-drawn-out as the preachers were together for an entire week.

At the Deer Creek Conference, with twenty preachers present, things went pretty much in accord with Asbury’s prearranged schedule. Presumably Rankin presided and evidently made final announcement of his approaching departure. The proposed committee was authorized—a Committee of Five, consisting of Edward Dromgoole,† Philip Gatch, William Watters, Daniel Ruff, and William Glendenning. Watters was made chairman. His own account therefore is of special interest:

. . . five of us, Gatch, Drumgoold, Ruff, Glendining and myself, were appointed as a committee to act in the place of the general Assistant in case they should all go before next conference. . . .²⁴¹

Asbury, it will be noted, was not named on the committee—presumably because it was thought that he might be compelled to leave the country or, as

* Bishop John J. Tigert says: “Asbury, whether designedly or by seizing an expected and most favorable opportunity, held a ‘caucus’ before the meeting of Conference. . . .” (*Op. cit.*, p. 87.) It is interesting to note that neither Jesse Lee nor Nathan Bangs makes any mention of this significant meeting.

† Edward Dromgoole (1751–1835), a native of County Sligo, Ireland, reared a Roman Catholic, was converted to Protestantism, and emigrated to America in 1770. He was admitted on trial in 1774 and appointed to Baltimore Circuit. He remained in the Traveling Connection until 1786—serving Virginia and North Carolina Circuits—and then located. For additional particulars see William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, IV, The Methodists*, 123f.

Tigert suggests, because it was thought expedient in view of the prevailing antagonism to the English that for the time being an American should be the official head of American Methodism.* In the matter of the certificates Asbury was overruled; they were voted, and signed in open Conference. Eight preachers were admitted into full connection, and fourteen received on trial—a larger number in each case than ever before. A voluntary pledge was taken not to desist from the traveling ministry because of the stress or dangers imposed by war:

We purpose, by the grace of God, not to take any step that may separate us from the brethren, or from the blessed work in which we are engaged.²⁴²

Again, Virginia Circuits were added—Sussex and Amelia. Appointments were resumed to Norfolk and Chester. For the first time, no appointment was made to New York. In all, thirty-five preachers were appointed to fifteen Circuits. Asbury was not assigned to a Circuit—probably because he foresaw the necessity in the near future of entering into seclusion**—although he continued to travel and to preach. Reports of preachers showed a much larger increase in membership than during any preceding year, 2,047, a total “in Society” of 6,968. Asbury states that the Conference ended in sore distress:

when the time of parting came, many wept as if they had lost their first-born sons. . . . thinking, as I suppose, they should not see the faces of the English preachers any more. This was such a parting as I never saw before.²⁴³

The sixth Annual Conference met at Leesburg on May 19, 1778, the first to be held in Virginia. This Conference marked a turning point in the history of American Methodism—the beginning of the end of Wesley’s administrative dominance. His sending of missionaries to America had been halted four years before. His representative as General Assistant had returned to England. Asbury, who was still of a mind to proceed in close cooperation with Wesley, was in forced retirement.† For the first time an American, William Watters,‡ was the administrative head of the Societies. Some of the preachers, Jesse Lee records, “had scruples of conscience about taking the oath of

* It should be noted, however, that three members of the committee—Dromgoole, Ruff, and Glendinning—were British immigrants.

** Almost immediately after Conference adjourned Asbury records lodging “at Mr. D’s; and the next day” collecting his writings and letters “in order to preserve them” (*op. cit.*, I, 244). A month later (June 27, 1777) he tells of appealing, with little hope of success, to two members of the Maryland Assembly to use their influence in procuring “a house to preach in,” recording his lament, “Alas! What have I done? Whose ox or ass have I taken, or whom have I defrauded.” He was allowed to preach in the church in Annapolis, “though the congregation was small, and the soldiers made a great noise before the door.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 246f.

† Asbury’s twenty months in Delaware were by no means a period of inactivity. For the greater part of the time he was ceaselessly active and during these months 1800 members were added to the Delaware Societies.—*Ibid.*, III, 340.

‡ William Watters (1751–1833), a native of Maryland, “born a child of grace” in his twentieth year, under the influence of Robert Williams began preaching in 1772. Received on trial at the Conference of 1773, he traveled Circuits in Maryland, New Jersey, and Virginia until 1782 when, having married, he was given a location. During 1801–05 he again did effective work as a Traveling Preacher, retiring because of failing health. His religious autobiography, *A Short Account of the Christian Experience, and Ministerial Labours, of William Watters*, is revealing as to the reality of his spiritual experience and the character of his ministry.

allegiance in the different states where they laboured, and . . . were forced to leave their stations."²⁴⁴ As a result, although nine were received on trial, there were only twenty-nine available for appointment, six less than the preceding year. Nearly half of the Traveling Preachers of 1777 had ceased to travel. Fear and devastation resulting from armies in conflict caused many people to leave their homes in search of safety and security. For the first time a serious decrease in net membership was recorded, 873. Five Circuits were temporarily discontinued: New York; Philadelphia; Frederick, Maryland; and—for the second time—Chester, Pennsylvania; and Norfolk. Nevertheless six new Circuits were added: Berkeley, Fluvanna, James City, and Lunenburg in Virginia; and three in North Carolina—Roanoke, Tar River, and New Hope—constituted by division of the former Carolina Circuit.²⁴⁵ Depreciation in currency had wrought such hardship that a change was made in the preachers' allowance, to "eight pounds, Virginia currency" per quarter.²⁴⁶

THE GREAT AWAKENING IN VIRGINIA

An anomaly of the war period was the fact that while the long-established Churches—the Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, and Baptist—were suffering general declension, the Methodist Societies were making phenomenal advance. The Dutch Reformed clergy lamented not only the destruction of churches but also the scattering and decrease of congregations and widespread religious indifference.²⁴⁷ Timothy Dwight declared that the Revolution was a period when "Infidelity began to obtain in this country an extensive currency and reception."²⁴⁸ Nevertheless, save for one year, as stated above, the Methodists registered remarkable net advance in membership. The number of widely extended Circuits in Virginia grew from one to six and the number of Circuit Riders increased from two in 1773 to four in 1774, to six in 1775. The New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey Societies suffered severe losses during the war years but the declension, such as it was, would have been far more extensive had it not been for a revival that has been characterized by a competent historical scholar as "the greatest awakening in the history of American Methodism."²⁴⁹ Jesse Lee, an eye-witness, said: "My pen cannot describe the one-half of what I saw, heard, and felt." In a very short time it spread through Dinwiddie, Amelia, Brunswick, Sussex, Prince George, Lunenburg, and Mecklenburg counties.

The foundation for the revival had been laid over a long series of years by that remarkable man of God, Devereux Jarratt (1732–1801), who as early as 1765 was beginning to see results of his earnest evangelical preaching in an increased interest in religion, particularly on the part of "the common people." This stirred him to increased effort so that he "began to preach abroad . . . and to meet little companies in the evenings, and to converse freely on

divine things." His account of the further progress of the awakening is as follows:

In the years 1770 and 1771 we had a more considerable outpouring of the Spirit, at a place in my Parish called White-Oak. It was here first I formed the people into a Society, that they might assist and strengthen each other. . . . In the year 1772, the revival was more considerable, and extended itself in some places, for fifty or sixty miles around. . . . In Spring, 1774, it was more remarkable than ever. . . . In the counties of Sussex and Brunswick, the work from the year 1773, was chiefly carried on by the people called Methodists. The first of them who appeared in these parts was Mr. Robert Williams. . . . The next year others of his brethren came, who gathered many societies, both in this neighborhood, and in other places, as far as North Carolina. . . . I earnestly recommended it to my Societies, to pray much . . . for a larger outpouring of the Spirit of God. They did so; and not in vain. We had . . . a revival of Religion, as great as perhaps ever was known, in country places, in so short a time. It began in the latter end of the year 1775: but was more considerable in January, 1776. . . . And the work went on with a pleasing progress, till the beginning of May. . . . The work now became more deep than ever, extended wider and was swifter in its operations. . . . The multitudes that attended . . . returning home all alive to God, spread the flame through their respective neighborhoods, which ran from family to family. . . .²⁵⁰

Effective as Jarratt's ministry was, it is generally agreed that the chief instrument in the Virginia Awakening during the year 1775-76 was George Shadford, appointed senior preacher on the Brunswick Circuit in May of that year. In no other place, says Jesse Lee, was the "gracious work of God . . . equal [to] that which took place in Brunswick Circuit."²⁵¹ At the beginning of the year, there were 800 in the Societies; at its close Shadford reported 2,664 members. The Circuit was very extensive, including appointments in fourteen counties of Virginia and Bute and Halifax Counties in North Carolina.²⁵² People who had been for years utterly indifferent to religion were converted, becoming zealous Christians. The converts included people old and grey headed, middle-aged persons and little children, both whites and Negroes.

Thomas Rankin also had an important part in the revival. In the summer of 1775 Rankin traveled through southern Virginia and into North Carolina in company with Jarratt—a trip on which both ministers preached "almost to the point of exhaustion." So large were the congregations that the chapels would not hold the people, and outdoor services were held. Of one such meeting Jarratt writes, "No chapel or preaching-house in Virginia would have contained one-third of the congregation."²⁵³ Rankin returned to Virginia in the spring of 1776. He preached to a great throng at Boisseau's (or Bushill's) Chapel on the last day of June. From there he went into North Carolina, returning to Virginia for a Quarterly Meeting, July 30-31, at Mabry's in Brunswick, where between two and three thousand people were in attendance.

As in the Great Awakening in New England in 1734-44, under the leader-

ship of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Gilbert Tennent,²⁵⁴ and again in the Great Awakening in the West around the turn of the century, the Virginia revival was characterized by what Jesse Lee refers to as "irregularities"—accompaniments of excess of emotion:

It was quite common for sinners to be seized with a trembling and shaking, and from that to fall down on the floor as if they were dead: and many of them have been convulsed from head to foot, while others have retained the use of their tongues so as to pray for mercy, while they were lying helpless on the ground or floor. The Christians too were . . . so overcome with the presence and love of God, as not to be able to stand on their feet. It was truly affecting to see them collecting round the penitent sinners, and praying for them one after another, and sometimes two or three together at the same time, until some of the mourners would get converted; and then to see the young converts leaping up with streaming eyes, and catching in their arms those that were nearest to them, and calling upon all present to praise God for what he had done for their souls.²⁵⁵

Jarratt states that in some meetings "there was not that order observed, which could have been wished," but he testifies that the "enthusiasm" never rose "to any considerable height, nor was it of long continuance." To Thomas Rankin the crying, shouting, and convulsions seemed unnecessary and undesirable. It was his wont to preface his sermon with a request to the congregation to observe order and quiet, and while he was preaching he "tried to keep the people from making any noise."²⁵⁶ George Shadford was undisturbed by emotional outbursts, and on some occasions seemed to encourage them.

The revival was the chief means of increasing the membership of the Methodist Societies in Virginia from 955 in 1775 to 2,456 in 1776 and 3,449 in 1777. Of 6,968 members reported at the 1777 Annual Conference, 4,379 were in Virginia and North Carolina. Jarratt had no question concerning the enduring values of the work. When the high tide of revival had passed, he wrote that he had not heard of one apostate and, though the zeal of many had waned, many profligates had been "effectually and lastingly changed into pious, uniform Christians."²⁵⁷ Wesley M. Gewehr who, in *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790*, has recorded the results of a thorough study of the revival says, "People of all ranks had been reached and in many regions a change had been wrought which was to leave a permanent impress upon the religious life of the Old Dominion."²⁵⁸

The zeal of Jarratt never flagged. His sermons from his own pulpit continued to attract hearers from near and far—many doubtless drawn by curiosity, but also many moved by their thirst for the word of life. He was unmoved by the reproaches, antagonism, and ridicule of fellow clergymen²⁵⁹—though derided as "an enthusiast, fanatic, visionary, dissenter . . . madman and what not."* Even after the revival interest had subsided he continued to

* Eighty-two years later the tone of Episcopal comment had changed. Who could blame "the faith-

itinerate widely throughout southern Virginia and North Carolina, preaching and administering the sacraments to members of the Methodist Societies. With the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the ordination of Methodist preachers his activities among Methodists decreased but his friendship with Asbury endured and at his death in 1801 his funeral sermon, by his request, was preached by the Methodist Bishop, who wept "tears of affectionate remembrance over his grave."²⁶⁰

SCHISM AVERTED

At the 1778 Annual Conference the place and date of the seventh Conference was fixed for the Brokenback Church, Fluvanna County, Virginia, May 18, 1779. During 1778 the patience of Virginia Methodists had been fast running out. They had waited long for action that would make available to them the sacraments of the Church. The large increase in Societies and members had made it impossible for Jarratt—indefatigable in labor as he was—to minister to all. Many of the children were unbaptized. The Anglican churches in most communities were without rectors, standing neglected and unused. The Leesburg Conference had discussed the question of providing for administration of the sacraments, as also had the 1777 Conference, and although a large majority were in favor, under pressure from Asbury had reluctantly decided to refer the issue to the next Conference for decision.²⁶¹

The situation that prevailed as the date fixed for the Conference drew near is stated by William Watters:

From my particular knowledge of all the preachers, I foresaw what would be the consequences of the subject of the ordinances which had been so warmly debated the two preceding conferences, and which I was fully satisfied a number of them were determined to adopt at the ensuing conference, though it were at the expense of an entire division. My great concern was not whether we should or should not adopt them; but on account of the division that I was satisfied would take place at their being adopted. I could freely and without hesitation have agreed either way to have prevented what I considered one of the greatest evils that could befall us. This important matter lay with solemn weight . . . on my mind and caused me many sleepless hours. Nothing to me, appeared more formidable, and leading to more terrible consequences than introducing unscriptural doctrines into, or dividing the Church of Christ. I finally came to a determination to endeavor by every means in my power to prevent a division: or if that could not be done, to stand in the gap as long as possible.²⁶²

Asbury was undoubtedly as fully acquainted with the situation as anyone, even though he had not been present at the preceding Conference. At the same

ful and zealous Mr. Jarratt . . . , " wrote William Meade, Bishop of Virginia, "for the encouragement afforded to the disciples of Mr. Wesley, at a time when neither he nor they thought there could be a separation from the Church of England?"—*Op. cit.*, Art. I, p. 16.

time he dared not leave his Delaware retreat to attend the forthcoming Conference. The reason is obvious. Watters states it thus:

. . . many had taken up strange notions about the methodist preachers, and of the Englishmen amongst us in particular being tools of the British ministry, which made him and his friends around him, think it imprudent for him to leave his present situation where he was well known. . . .²⁶³

Foreseeing that the Virginia and North Carolina preachers, now a majority, would probably take affirmative action on the ordinances, Asbury determined on a bold course to forestall such decision—the holding of a Conference of the northern preachers. The Conference was held at Asbury's retreat, Thomas White's, in Kent County, Delaware, beginning on April 28, 1779. Watters makes clear that it was an invited Conference saying that, though no notice was sent him, he determined to attend. The *Minutes* are included in the *General Minutes* along with those of the regular Annual Conference. Jesse Lee refers to it as "a preparatory conference"²⁶⁴ though, as we shall see, it assumed legislative functions as though it were the regular Conference. Asbury calls it "Our Conference for the northern stations," and states that all the preachers "on these stations were present, and united."²⁶⁵ The *Minutes* list sixteen preachers "as willing to take the station this Conference shall place them in, and continue till next Conference." A new question was introduced: "Who desist from travelling?" Previously, no record was made in the *Minutes* of those who left the Traveling Connection. Two new rules, or directions, were recorded, one that no "helper" should make any alteration in a Circuit, or "appoint preaching in any new place" without consultation with the Assistant; the other that every Exhorter and Local Preacher should go "by the directions of the assistants where, and only where, they shall appoint."

Finally, this minority group took two other very significant actions. In answer to the question: "*Shall we guard against a separation from the Church, directly or indirectly?*" they recorded "By all means."²⁶⁶ By this action, which was not provisional but unconditional, they assumed authority of determining the sacramental issue, although approaching it thus indirectly. It is perfectly clear that deciding to administer the Lord's Supper and to baptize involved ordination, and that ordination meant separation. But the minority, under Asbury's leadership, were not content with thus registering a decision that determined the sacramental controversy without taking into account the votes of the brethren not present, yet to be recorded at Fluvanna. They went on to a determination of who should be General Assistant—Wesley having designated no successor to Rankin:

Quest. 12. *Ought not brother Asbury to act as general assistant in America?*
He ought: 1st, on account of his age; 2d, because originally appointed by Mr. Wes-

ley; 3d, being joined with Messrs. Rankin and Shadford, by express order from Mr. Wesley.

Not yet completely satisfied, the Conference proceeded to define Asbury's power as absolute and final:

Quest. 13. *How far shall his power extend?* On hearing every preacher for and against what is in debate, the right of determination shall rest with him, according to the Minutes.²⁶⁷

Having made these momentous decisions the preachers agreed to meet again in Annual Conference in Baltimore one year hence.*

The seventh Annual Conference was convened, as agreed, at Brokenback Church on May 18, 1779. Thirty-two preachers are named in the *General Minutes* as appointed to Circuits, but as there are some duplications of the northern Conference list, and as William Watters states that he was "the only preacher in actual attendance at both Conferences," it is probable that not more than thirty were present. It is not certain who presided, probably Philip Gatch, since he was prominently identified with the proceedings and was a member of the supervisory Committee of Five.²⁶⁸ Asbury's name nowhere appears in the *Minutes*, and no notice was taken of his election as General Assistant. Watters acted as the liaison, reporting "the opinion and determination of . . . [the] little conference, on the matter in debate" and carrying "a few letters, from Mr. Asbury to several of the oldest preachers."²⁶⁹ By action of the Conference, preachers who had been on trial for one year were continued for a second, thus lengthening the period of probation to two years.

The *General Minutes* are defective in that they entirely omit the official action taken on the question at issue. The manuscript "Journal" of Philip Gatch† is the best extant authority:

Ques. 14. What are our reasons for taking up the administration of the ordinances among us? Ans. Because the Episcopal establishment is now dissolved, and,

* Concerning the legality of this Conference wide differences of opinion have been expressed. Jesse Lee is discreetly silent. Nathan Bangs, after stating that Asbury "by a vote of this conference" acted as the General Assistant, indulges in this strange process of reasoning: "Although this was considered as 'a preparatory conference,' yet if we take into consideration that the one afterward held . . . was held in the absence of the general assistant, we shall see good reason for allowing that this, which was held under the presidency of Mr. Asbury, was the *regular* conference, and hence their acts and doings are to be considered valid." (*Op. cit.*, I, 128.) Abel Stevens says, "The Fluvanna Conference, being the 'regularly appointed' session of this year had the question therefore legitimately before it." (*Op. cit.*, II, 59.) Tigert, without definitely ruling on the legality of its action, comments: "Asbury doubtless believed that he, more than any other man, would be held responsible by Mr. Wesley for such a radical revolution in American Methodism: therefore to meet an extraordinary emergency he assumed and exercised extraordinary powers. His 'preparatory' Conference he esteemed 'regular' because its action was in harmony with what had hitherto been recognized as essentially Methodist. . . ."—*Op. cit.*, p. 101.

† Philip Gatch (1751-1835), born in Baltimore County, Md., admitted in full connection at the second Methodist Conference in America (1774), was one of the first American-born itinerants, a prominent and successful evangelist. Because of ill health and family responsibilities, he soon located—continuing to preach frequently. He became a prosperous planter in Buckingham County, Va., but in 1798 migrated to Clermont County, Ohio. He was a member of the Ohio constitutional convention and later served for twenty-one years as an associate judge of the county. To the end of his life he was a zealous Methodist and a widely esteemed citizen.—See John M'Lean, *Sketch [including Journal] of Rev. Philip Gatch*; William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (New York: R. Carter and Brothers, 1861), VII, 50ff.

therefore, in almost all our circuits the members are without the ordinances—[we believe it to be our duty. . . .]

Ques. 19. What form of ordination shall be observed, to authorize any Preacher to administer? *Ans.* By that of a Presbytery.

Ques. 20. How shall the Presbytery be appointed? *Ans.* By a majority of the Preachers.

Ques. 21. Who are the Presbytery? *Ans.* P. Gatch, R. Ellis, James Foster, and, in case of necessity,—Leroy Cole.

Ques. 22. What power is vested in the Presbytery by this choice? *Ans.* First, to administer the ordinances themselves; second, to authorize any other Preacher or Preachers, approved by them, by the form of laying on of hands.²⁷⁰

Jesse Lee completes the record:

The committee thus chosen, first ordained themselves, and then proceeded to ordain and set apart other preachers for the same purpose, that they might administer the holy ordinances to the Church of Christ.²⁷¹

The *Minutes* of the Delaware Conference give no statistics. Those of the Fluvanna Conference include all the Circuits, North and South, reporting a total of 8,577 members. The only Circuits (with appointments) given in both *Minutes* are Baltimore and Frederick, Maryland.

Business completed, the Fluvanna Conference adjourned to meet a year later at Manakintown, Virginia. The preachers went forth to their Circuits, preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments wherever they went, meeting with much success, which confirmed them in their belief "that the step they had taken was owned and honored of God." The action, however, was not unanimous. Gatch indicates that eighteen preachers signed a statement of approval and records no dissent. Watters says, "The few who did not agree to what was done," whose freedom of action was not limited by having families to care for, "came in company with me, and took their stations more to the north."²⁷²

What had the Fluvanna Conference done? Whether they fully realized it or not the preachers had in effect formed a Church of the Presbyterian order. Watters went away with a heavy heart, deeply disturbed at seeing

some of the best men that I ever knew so little concerned, to appearance, at what to me was one of the greatest matters in the world.²⁷³

Asbury undoubtedly received from Watters a full account of the proceedings. Only one comment is to be found in his *Journal*—that under date of June 20, 1779—laconic and scarcely charitable:

I received the minutes of the Virginia Conference, by which I learn the preachers there have been effecting a lame separation from the Episcopal Church, that will last about one year. I pity them: Satan has a desire to have us, that he may sift us like wheat.²⁷⁴

The following year was one of tribulation, marked by "great troubles and distresses . . . both among preachers and private members" because of the unhappy separation that had occurred. Asbury was active, continuously traveling and preaching, but still confined to the state of Delaware. The separation was much upon his mind and heart. He records (July 26) writing to the "dissenting brethren in Virginia, hoping to reclaim them." In November he mentions being "pressed to go to Virginia" and says, "time and circumstances must shortly determine."²⁷⁵

On April 24, 1780, the northern Conference met in the new Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore. It was a busy session with much important legislation. Preliminary to other business the question was asked: *What preachers do now agree to sit in Conference on the original plan as Methodists?* Twenty-four names are recorded, eight more than had approved the like question a year before. Three of the twenty-four were young men admitted on trial, one of whom had formally approved the Fluvanna action. Among the more important actions were these: (7.) That all the Assistants should "see to the settling of all the preaching houses by trustees," with deeds to be drawn; (8.) That all the Traveling Preachers should take a written license from the Conference, certifying that they were either Assistants or Helpers; (10.) That every Local Preacher and Exhorter should have a license, to be renewed quarterly, after examination, and that none should be "presumed to speak in public," without a license; (14.) That wives of Traveling Preachers "shall receive an equivalent with their husbands in quarterage, if they stand in need—a provision now made for the first time; (15.) Quarterly Meetings, previously held on weekdays, to be held on Saturdays and Sundays "when convenient."

On the matter of the sacraments Asbury's attitude was uncompromising, the questions, evidently proposed from the chair, constituting an ultimatum to the Virginia brethren:

Quest. 12. *Shall we continue in close connection with the Church [of England], and press our people to a closer communion with her?* Ans. Yes.

Quest. 13. *Will this Conference grant the privilege to all the friendly clergy of the Church of England, at the request or desire of the people, to preach or administer the ordinances in our preaching houses or chapels?* Ans. Yes.

Quest. 20. *Does this whole Conference disapprove the step our brethren have taken in Virginia?* Ans. Yes.

Quest. 21. *Do we look upon them no longer as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back?* Ans. Agreed.

Quest. 26. *What must be the conditions of our union with our Virginia brethren?* Ans. To suspend all their administrations for one year, and all meet together in Baltimore.²⁷⁶

Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and Watters were appointed to attend the Virginia Conference to inform the southern preachers of the actions taken "and receive their answer."

Philip Gatch and Reuben Ellis* were in attendance at Baltimore "to see if anything could be done to prevent a total disunion." William Watters records that "both thought their brethren were hard with them" and "there was little appearance of anything but an entire separation." He says he went to Virginia, "hoping against hope" and fearing that the "visit would be of little consequence."²⁷⁷ Asbury also went "with a heavy heart," fearing "the violence of a party of positive men."

The southern Conference met at Manakintown, Powhatan County, Virginia, on May 8, 1780. No official minutes of the Conference, so far as is known, are in existence other than the list of appointments and statistics.† Asbury's account is the fullest extant record. He says that he conducted himself "with cheerful freedom, but found there was a separation in heart and practice." He conferred privately with his "countryman, John Dickins" and found him opposed to "continuance in union with the Episcopal Church." Watters and Garrettson had been designated to confer with personal friends. They "tried their men, and found them inflexible." The Conference opened. Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters, who had been joined by Edward Dromgoole, remained without. Presently they were invited to come into the Conference room. Asbury continues:

... I was permitted to speak; I read Mr. Wesley's thoughts against a separation; showed my private letters of instructions from Mr. Wesley; set before them the sentiments of the Delaware and Baltimore conferences; read our epistles, and read my letter to brother Gatch, and Dickin's letter in answer. After some time spent this way, it was proposed to me, if I would get the circuits supplied, they would desist; but that I could not do.

At this point there was an adjournment. Asbury preached. In the afternoon the Conference session was resumed:

... the preachers appeared to me to be farther off; there had been, I thought, some talking out of doors. When we—Asbury, Garrettson, Watters, and Dromgoole—could not come to a conclusion with them, we withdrew, and left them to deliberate on the conditions I offered, which was, to suspend the measures they had taken for one year. After an hour's conference, we were called to receive their answer, which was, they could not submit to the terms of union. I then prepared to leave the house ... under the heaviest cloud I ever felt in America. ... ²⁷⁸

* Reuben Ellis (?-1796), a native of North Carolina, was admitted on trial in 1777 and appointed to the Amelia Circuit. He was present at the Christmas Conference. The following year he was appointed Elder in eastern North Carolina. He was highly regarded as a man "of slow, but very sure and solid parts, both as a counsellor and a guide"—one of the most useful of the early American preachers.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 67.

† The Manakintown Conference had just claim to be considered the regular Conference. Abel Stevens' statement that the omission of the record of its proceedings from the *General Minutes*, or their suppression, is "a grave defect in the official records of the denomination, (*op. cit.*, II, 66, 73), is fully justified.

On the following morning Asbury returned to take his leave of the Conference and found that the preachers had not only come to agreement to accept the proffered terms but had voted to invite him (Asbury) "to ride through the different circuits and superintend the work at large."²⁷⁹ Asbury adds:

... they were brought to an agreement while I had been praying, as with a broken heart, in the house we went to lodge at; and brother Watters and Garrettson had been praying up stairs where the conference sat.²⁸⁰

The breach was healed, and the Conference adjourned with great rejoicing to meet together as a united band a year later. Not everyone was satisfied. Jesse Lee says that while most of the preachers were thankful that union had been restored, a few "were so fond of their new self-made ordination" that they gave it up with reluctance.²⁸¹

Asbury now felt free to travel. Immediately following the Conference he made an extensive preaching tour through southern Virginia and on into North Carolina. The responsiveness of the people to his message caused some self-reproach: "it may have been my fault," he wrote, "that . . . [the separation] took place. . . . May we all be more prudent."²⁸² Week after week he pressed on—preaching almost every day. On September 4 he re-entered Virginia from North Carolina. He preached his way across Virginia and on October 30 crossed Georgetown ferry into Maryland. On November 9 he came to his "old lodgings" at Thomas White's in Delaware, where he "met the preachers" and arranged the appointments for the next half-year, calculating that he had traveled 2,671 miles in six months: "yet am uneasy when still."²⁸³ The war caused widespread suffering in Virginia during the winter of 1780–81, so severe "that some of the Circuits were wholly forsaken, and no return of members could be made."²⁸⁴

The ninth Annual Conference met at Choptank, Delaware, on April 16, 1781, for the convenience of those preachers who could not go into Maryland, and on the twenty-fourth adjourned to Baltimore. The resolution on discountenancing separation was again brought forward and this year was signed by thirty-nine of the fifty-four preachers. But the names of some of the leading preachers of the South are missing. Freeborn Garrettson states that reply had been received from Wesley to the letters written by Asbury* and Dickins:

We met and received Mr. Wesley's answer, which was that we should continue on the old plan until further direction. We unanimously agreed to follow his counsel and went on harmoniously.²⁸⁵

The *Minutes* record eight preachers admitted on trial. Circuits were increased to twenty-five in number. The New Jersey Circuit was divided into

* Asbury's brief note says, "Our conference began in Baltimore, where several of the preachers attended from Virginia and North Carolina. All but one agreed to return to the old plan, and give up the administration of the ordinances . . . all was conducted in peace and love."—*Op. cit.*, I, 423.

two—East Jersey and West Jersey. In Pennsylvania, York Circuit was added: in Maryland, Somerset, Talbot, and Calvert; and in Virginia, the Isle of Wight. Fifty-four preachers received appointments. More remarkable still, 10,539 members were reported "in Society"; considering the increased violence and widespread distresses of war, a phenomenal increase.

The British invasion of Virginia in 1780 caused an attempt to enforce conscription.²⁸⁶ The effort met widespread resistance on the part of the people generally, including many Methodists. As some were convinced pacifists, "no threatenings could compel them to bear arms, or hire . . . [men] to take their places."²⁸⁷ Persecution was severe, some "were whipped, some were fined, and some imprisoned. . . ." Yet they stood firm.

Lack of the ordinances continued to cause complaint by both lay people and preachers—not without cause—since there were many in the Societies who were not within reach of an Episcopal church. On January 10, 1782, Asbury records meeting two of the preachers at White-Oak Chapel, Virginia, where Adam Cloud, a young minister, was baptized by Jarratt.

On April 27, 1782, the tenth Annual Conference convened at Ellis's Chapel, Sussex County, Virginia, adjourning to meet in Baltimore, on May 21. So great had been the extension of the work that one Conference, it was agreed, was no longer sufficient, and it was decided two should thereafter be held—one in the North and another in the South. Since the northern Conference "was of the longest standing, and withal composed of the oldest preachers" it was recognized as having more authority and its decisions as final.²⁸⁸ Two new Circuits were added, Lancaster in Pennsylvania and South Branch in Virginia, a net increase of one. Fifty-nine preachers were appointed to travel twenty-six Circuits. For the first time transfer of membership from one Society to another was provided for, no newcomer to be received into membership without a certificate of transfer. Jarratt was present at the Virginia session, preaching both the opening and closing sermons.²⁸⁹ At Baltimore Asbury's commission "to act according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment, and preside over the American conference and the whole work" was unanimously reaffirmed,²⁹⁰ but of this action he makes no mention in his *Journal*.

By the beginning of 1783 the Circuit Riders had more freedom of movement, and religious activities were increased in many sections of the country. In the northern part of Virginia and some parts of Maryland successful revivals were held. On April 5 word that peace between England and America had been confirmed reached Asbury on his remote rural round in North Carolina. What must have been his exultation at the news was tempered by sober reflection:

. . . it may cause great changes to take place amongst us; some for the better, and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God: our preachers will be

far more likely to settle in the world; and our people, by getting into trade, and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit.²⁹¹

The eleventh Annual Conference met in May, the Virginia session again being held at Ellis's Meeting House, beginning on May 6, and the Baltimore session on May 27. Eleven new Circuits were added, testifying to the increased freedom of movement.* Nineteen preachers were received on trial; eighty-two were appointed to thirty-five Circuits, and membership of the Societies was reported to have increased by 1,955. Of the questions asked, one concerned thanksgiving for the coming of peace: "How many days of thanksgiving shall we have for our public peace, temporal and spiritual prosperity, and for the glorious work of God?" Two were decided upon: "the first Thursdays in July and October." For the first time a rule was adopted on who should attend Annual Conference, making attendance compulsory for Assistants and "those who are to be received into connection."²⁹²

This, also, as Jesse Lee testifies, proved to be a fruitful Conference year. General peace now being accomplished, he says:

... we could go into all parts of the country without fear; and we soon began to enlarge our borders, and to preach in many places where we had not been before. ... during the war ... many of the members of our societies had, through fear, necessity, or choice, moved into the back settlements, and into new parts of the country ... they [now] solicited us to come among them ... [by] earnest and frequent petitions, both verbal and written ... they were ready to receive us with open hands and willing hearts ... the work greatly revived, and the heavenly flame of religion spread far and wide.²⁹³

The twelfth Annual Conference—the last before the organization of American Methodism as a Church—was convened at Ellis's Meeting House on April 30, 1784; its session concluded in Baltimore on May 28. Report had doubtless been made to Wesley on the action of the Conference in reaffirming choice of Asbury as General Assistant. In the course of a letter dated October 3, 1783, Wesley—without formally reappointing Asbury—signified his approval of the Conference action:

I do not wish our *American* brethren to receive any [preachers] who make any difficulty of receiving *Francis Asbury* as the general assistant.²⁹⁴

This letter was not received by Asbury until December 24. It doubtless relieved his mind, for even before the date of Wesley's letter he had written (September 20) bidding for Wesley's sanction of the Conference action and virtually serving notice—firmly though delicately phrased—that he had no intention of giving way to any new General Assistant whom Wesley might choose to send from England:

* The Circuits were: in Maryland, Caroline and Annapessex; in Virginia, Alleghany, Cumberland, and Holston; and in North Carolina, Guilford, Caswell, Salisbury, Marsh, Bertie, and Pasquotank.

No person can manage the lay preachers here so well, it is thought, as one who has been at the raising of most of them. No man can make a proper change upon paper to send one here and another [there] without knowing the circuits and the gifts of all the preachers, unless he is always out among them. My dear sir, a matter of the greatest consequence now lies before you. . . . I have labored and suffered much to keep the people and preachers together, and if I am thought worthy to keep my place I should be willing to labor and suffer till death for peace and union.²⁹⁵

For the first time since 1775 the Trenton Circuit appeared in the list of appointments and two new northern Circuits were added: Juniata and Long Island. Four new Virginia Circuits also appeared.* Eleven preachers were admitted on trial, and 1,248 additional members reported. In the *Minutes* formal record was made for the first time of preachers who had died during the Conference year.²⁹⁶ Three Conferences were appointed to be held in 1785, one in Baltimore, one in Virginia, and one—the first—in North Carolina.

GROWTH IN THE FIRST FIFTEEN YEARS

Fifteen years had now passed (1769–84) since the arrival of Wesley's first missionaries. Within this brief period the Methodists had increased from a few widely separated Classes to some fifteen thousand members "in Society";²⁹⁷ preachers "in connection" from none to eighty-three, besides some hundreds of Local Preachers and Exhorters—many of whom were as incessantly active in preaching as the Conference members themselves.

But these statistics by no means constitute a complete estimate of the religious community to whom the Methodist itinerants ministered. The line of recorded membership was rigidly drawn, only those being recorded as "in Society" who adhered strictly to the Methodist discipline. Abel Stevens estimates the total number of adherents as approximately two hundred thousand. The Methodist congregations "whether in chapels, barns, or groves, were the largest in the country."²⁹⁸ Probably the majority of the members of the Church of England in Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware attended services at the Methodist chapels, for they had almost no ministry of their own.

There were Methodist Societies in New York City, on Staten Island and Long Island, and in Westchester County. In New Jersey there were organized Societies in all the counties of West Jersey and in several of East Jersey. In Pennsylvania they were in the city of Philadelphia, in Bucks and Montgomery Counties; in the southern tier of counties as far as Bedford; on the Juniata River and in the "Redstone country" beyond the Alleghenies. They were in every county of Maryland and Delaware and in most of the counties of Virginia east of the Allegheny Mountains. In the southwest corner of the state

* New Virginia Circuits were Amherst, Bedford, Hampton, and Accomac.

they were established on the headwaters of the Holston River. Finally, they were in all parts of North Carolina, with the exception of a few settlements in the southeastern and southwestern counties. More than sixty chapels had been built or purchased*—most of them humble buildings, none “stuccoed or frescoed.”²⁹⁹ Some, however, were substantial, strongly built structures, such as Barratt’s Chapel, near Frederica, Delaware, built of brick in 1780 and still in use (1948) after one hundred and sixty-eight years.

Growth had not been uniform in the several regions where the missionaries had labored. In general it had been most rapid in the parts of the country where the Church of England was strongest; and, second, in the sections regularly visited by the itinerants where warfare had offered the fewest hindrances. New York including, in addition to Wesley Chapel, Staten Island and Long Island, had many fewer members in 1784 than in 1773.† Following the British evacuation of New York in November, 1783—and before—the Methodist Society suffered heavy loss by the flight of Loyalists to Nova Scotia and other British provinces of Canada.³⁰⁰ Of the 14,988 members in 1784, only about 2,500 were to be found north of Maryland. But even in the South there were communities where little interest was shown and few recruits enlisted. At the 1784 Conference the question was asked: “*What shall be done with those places we have long tried, and appear to grow worse every year?*” and the answer recorded was:

If you are obliged to make use of such places to get to more valuable ones, appoint no public preaching, but only meet society in the evening, or speak to the black people.³⁰¹

Under changed conditions and with the limitations imposed by war removed, far greater advance than had yet been recorded was about to be made.

* John Lednum enumerates most of the chapels by name: New York, Wesley Chapel (New York); New Jersey, the New Mills House (Trenton), and Salem (Salem Co.); Pennsylvania, St. George’s (Philadelphia), Bethel (Montgomery), Old Forrest (Berks Co.), Benson’s, and the Valley, or Grove (Chester Co.); Delaware, Forrest, or Thomas’s, Barratt’s, White’s, Bethel, and Moore’s (all in Sussex Co.), Cloud’s, Blackiston’s, Friendship (in Thoroughfare Neck), and Wesley Chapel (Dover); Maryland, the Pipe or Sam’s Creek, Bush Forrest, Gunpowder, Back River Neck, Middle River Neck, Fell’s Point, Baltimore, Kent Meeting House, Mountain Meeting House, Bennett’s, Hunt’s, Deer Creek, Dudley’s, Tuckahoe, Quantico, Annessex Chapel, and one in Somerset County, Line Chapel; Bolingbroke Chapel, Newtown-Chester, or Chestertown Chapel, and Werton Chapel; Virginia, Yeargin’s, Lane’s, Boisseau’s, Mabry’s, Merritt’s, Easlin’s, White’s, Stony Hill, Mumpin’s, Rose Creek, Adams’s, Ellis’s, Mason’s, Howell’s, Nansemond, and a few in Norfolk and Portsmouth; North Carolina, Nutbush, Cypress, Pope’s, Taylor’s, Henley’s, Lee’s, Watson’s, Parish’s, and Jones’s.—*Op. cit.*, p. 417.

† Although New York does not appear on the list of Stations during the six years, 1777–82, the pulpit of Wesley Chapel was continuously occupied—first by John Mann, a Local Preacher who later went to Nova Scotia, and then by Samuel Spraggs, a strongly pro-British preacher who was admitted into full connection in 1776 and—it is reported—was driven from the Frederick, Del., Circuit by the patriots. Asbury says of him (*op. cit.*, I, 184f.) that he “does not seem to enter into the Methodist plan of preaching. He uses a few pompous, swelling words, which pass for something great with short-sighted people! but are not calculated to do them much spiritual good.” Following the close of the war he became an Episcopal clergyman.

II

Roots in American Soil

1784-1819

AT THE BEGINNING of its national life the United States was a comparatively poor, thinly populated country with little realization of its potential resources. It could, as yet, scarcely be called a nation; it was merely a loose confederation of thirteen states. Although these states had fought side by side, they were separated by deep cleavages of various kinds.* Some of the nation's most fertile areas had been overrun and devastated by war.¹ It was borne down by a heavy load of debt. Credit had depreciated to a point where its money was a byword—"not worth a continental." But opening before the discordant states was an opportunity to develop a national will and a new way of their own.

Nor at this time could American Methodism be said to be a Church. Over a wide area local Methodist "Societies" had been established, loosely associated, possessing a more or less common type of religious experience and a common bond of loyalty to the Wesleyan Movement and its teachings. As yet there was no general organization. With national independence, greater solidarity, and with an independent Church, organization became imperative.

The western boundary of the potential nation was the Mississippi River; the southern, the northern boundary of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico. But these boundaries were soon to change. In 1800 the vast and largely unexplored region west of the Mississippi known as Louisiana was ceded by Spain to Bonaparte, who sold it in 1803 to the United States for fifteen million dollars.† Florida, which had been returned to Spain by England at the close of the Revolutionary War, in 1819 also was bought from Spain by the United States.

The total population into whose hands was committed the task of building the new nation consisted of fewer than four million people—less than that of any one of four states of the Union at the beginning of the twentieth century,

* "The mutual antipathies and clashing interests of the Americans," declared Josiah Tucker, dean of Gloucester, "their difference of governments, habitudes, and manners, indicate that they will have no centre of union and no common interest. They never can be united into one compact empire under any species of government whatever."

† The area purchased included the present states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and a large part of Colorado and Minnesota.



a little more than one hundred years later.* The first national census—that of 1790—gave the population total as 3,930,000, but, inasmuch as the enumeration was incomplete west of the mountains, by estimate the count was increased by 20,000.² In the southern half of the country approximately three-eighths of the people were Negroes—most numerous in Virginia.

The urban population formed a small proportion of the whole. Only three out of one hundred people lived in cities of eight thousand or more. Philadelphia, with its twenty-eight thousand people, was regarded as America's chief city. It was growing rapidly and by the end of the century had forty-two thousand. New York was a close competitor. It had a more cosmopolitan population, of whom a ninth were Negroes; and "almost any European could find fellowship with people of his own nation and tongue."³ Boston had eighteen thousand inhabitants, with a larger proportion of English of old native stock than any other city. Charleston, South Carolina, was fourth in size. Of its sixteen thousand people, six thousand were Negroes. Baltimore, although an important port growing busier every year, with its thirteen thousand people was little more than an overgrown village.

West of the mountains there were no cities. Pittsburgh, important because of its location on the Ohio River, had in 1790 fewer than four hundred inhabitants. Cincinnati, first laid out as a town in 1789, in 1795 was still a little village of five hundred people living in ten frame houses and ninety-four log cabins. The entire territory that in 1792 became the state of Kentucky had in 1790 only seventy-three thousand people. In 1788, when Andrew Jackson saw Nashville for the first time, it was a village of some eighty cabins with a courthouse and a jail. Tennessee as a whole in 1790 (admitted to the Union as a state in 1796) had only thirty-six thousand inhabitants. As late as 1800 the territory of Indiana numbered only 5,641 persons.⁴

REDISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Always war is an unsettling influence and in this particular the Revolutionary War was no different from others. An early effect was the breaking up by confiscation of hundreds of the great Tory estates, the freeing of the soil from feudal land law, and the opening of the land for settlement in small parcels. Soon after the war began redistribution of population started, steadily increasing in volume. Migration was northward and southward and westward. People of Connecticut and other New England states migrated to Vermont and Maine.† Many farmers of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina left

* Virginia had the largest population (748,308); Pennsylvania was second (434,373); North Carolina third (393,751); Massachusetts fourth (378,717); New York fifth (340,120); and Maryland sixth (319,728).

† From a population of about 30 thousand in 1784, Vermont increased to 85 thousand in 1790; 154 thousand in 1800; and 217 thousand in 1810. Maine, not admitted to statehood until 1820, grew from 96 thousand in 1790 to 152 thousand in 1800, and 228 thousand in 1810.

their worn-out tobacco lands and migrated to the sparsely populated areas of Georgia.* Others crossed the mountains to the west.

Year by year the migration westward rapidly increased. At first it was the western parts of Pennsylvania and New York that stirred the imagination of adventurous and ambitious easterners. At the close of the war the state of New York's population was estimated at 340 thousand; by 1800 it had increased to 586 thousand, and by 1820 to 1,372,812, making it "the Empire State."⁵ As much as four-fifths of the phenomenal increase before 1800 was in the western areas of the state, which had been wrested from the Iroquois Indians in 1768 by the first treaty of Fort Stanwix. Meanwhile Tennessee and Kentucky were being rapidly occupied by settlers from Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas.

There were two principal roads across Pennsylvania; another through Virginia to Knoxville, Tennessee, with a branch to Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap. There were trails also through the Carolinas. Many of the New Englanders followed the Mohawk Valley westward; others found their way by devious routes to the shore of Lake Ontario or the eastern end of Lake Erie, thence westward. But for Northern emigrants the river route was most attractive, and many thousands embarked on flatboats, keelboats, and arks on the Monongahela and the Allegheny to Pittsburgh, thence down the Ohio.⁶

By the Ordinance of 1787 a government was established for the territory north of the Ohio River. Previous to that year most of the settlers emigrating from the North, the Middle East, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas had located in Kentucky and Tennessee, but the opening up of Ohio by the 1787 Ordinance and the signing of the treaty of Greenville in 1795, following Wayne's victory over the Indians of the Miami Confederacy, turned the tide of emigration, and the population of Ohio began to increase rapidly. Almost without white settlers in 1783 and having so few in 1790 that no estimate for the area was included in the first census, by 1800 it had forty-five thousand population, was admitted as a state in 1802, and by 1810 had 231 thousand inhabitants. By 1820 Ohio stood fifth in population among the states of the Union, and Kentucky sixth.⁷

In picturesque and withal accurate language the migration has been described by Stephen Vincent Benét:

Men and women packed up their goods and loaded them on wagons and moved a thousand miles with their children, their few and cherished possessions, their slips of rosebushes and apple seedlings, their Bibles, their books and their guns—to find a new home in the rich and dangerous western lands. They floated down the rivers in flatboats, they fought Indian tribes and the weather, they starved and suffered and planted themselves in the land. . . . The frontier—the chance of the frontier—the

* From 82 thousand in 1790 Georgia increased in population to 162 thousand in 1800, and 252 thousand in 1810.

fertile earth waiting for men to struggle with it—was a magnet that drew the brave and the daring as it drew the misfit, the ill-adjusted, and the people who did not get on well at home.⁸

This great shift of population was not accounted for by immigration, for from the close of the Revolution to the end of the War of 1812–14 immigration was so limited in volume as to be almost inconsequential. No official records were kept but it has been estimated that the annual total was seldom more than five or six thousand persons. The shift was of the nature of a redistribution of the nation's people. The motives for migration from one part of the country to another were various. Some of the pioneers were restless adventurers. Others were refugees from the law. Probably the majority were prompted chiefly by desire to better their economic situation—hoping to find in the western country new and greater chances for advancement than were offered by the rocky soil of New England and the more thickly settled areas of New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and other older states. Many had become dissatisfied with the conservatism and the crystallization of the social order in the East and in their desire for greater economic, religious, and political freedom sought opportunity to establish homes in newer sections less hampered by custom, tradition, and belief.

Unmistakably, cheap and fertile land was a powerful lure.⁹ Land companies and individual speculators offered new and rich land at attractive prices. The general land law of Pennsylvania enacted in 1792 offered bona fide settlers a chance to secure farms at prices ranging from seven to twenty cents an acre. A major part of the Western Reserve in Ohio was controlled by a Connecticut company which vigorously pushed the sale of land—as one inducement founding in 1796 “Cleaveland” on Lake Erie. In 1800 Congress liberalized the federal land law making it possible for land-hungry emigrants to secure 320 acres at two dollars per acre by making a down payment of \$160. and binding themselves to pay the balance over a period of four or more years.

With the beginning of the War of 1812–14 many thousands of people were seized with the impulse of migration and by the end of the war the greatest movement of people that the nation up to that time had ever seen was under way. It continued to the close of the second decade of the century. Morris Birkbeck, who followed the National Road across Pennsylvania in 1817, records his impression that all the older parts of the nation were “breaking up and moving westward.”¹⁰ Along all possible lines of travel migration to the West was under way, seeking out undeveloped areas and establishing settlements in unexpected places.

The movement of the native population was now supplemented by a largely increased immigration. The newcomers were welcomed. For was there not unlimited space? The feeling expressed by Jefferson was widely shared:

America was "a chosen country with room enough for all descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation."¹¹ Some thirty thousand immigrants entered the country in 1817 and as many more the next year.¹² They came from France and Germany, chiefly the Rhineland and the German-speaking Swiss cantons; and, probably two-thirds, from the British Isles—marginal-land farmers from Scotland; artisans and mill-workers from England; and Irish peasants "fleeing from starvation diet and oppressive leases." The migration now swept through Ohio and the other new states to the Mississippi River and beyond. By 1817–18 it seemed that Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky were literally "pouring out their people" that Illinois and Missouri, as had Indiana a year earlier, might achieve statehood.¹³

A vast population was driving westward, felling the forests, breaking the prairie soil, opening roads, navigating rivers, building canals to connect lakes and waterways, constructing mills and factories, founding new communities and commonwealths, and dealing constructively with difficult social and economic problems on a grand scale. Social principles of great significance to human welfare, long ignored, were being formulated, courageously advocated, and in some cases fearlessly applied. A great new nation was in the making.

ENVIRONING SOCIETY WITHIN WHICH AMERICAN METHODISM GREW

Whether the social stratification that prevailed in the colonies—always much less rigidly defined than in Europe—was to persist in the new nation remained to be decided.

During these early decades nine-tenths of the population of the whole country was rural, most of the people gaining their living from the land in one way or another. Rural culture, agricultural civilization, everywhere was predominant. Of the many Methodist preachers compelled to locate during this period in order to support their families and for health reasons, the majority settled on farms.

Prestige attached to rural life. "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God," declared Thomas Jefferson. "They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most valuable citizens." John Taylor, Jefferson's fellow Virginian, extolled agriculture as an art but little less than divine for did it not feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and sustain the soul with health and vigor?

Within a few decades Methodism was to root itself deeply in each of the several regional units and make to the life of each its distinctive contribution. Unlike the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches, Methodism considered that the nation was its parish.* Its special concern was not for any one

* The special concern of the Congregational missionaries was for the New England emigrants in various sections of the West. Although Presbyterianism was nationwide, the "Presbyterian frontier preacher tended to limit his activities to people of Presbyterian background and to Scotch-Irish or Scotch

section or group, but for American society as a whole. But just as America was a nation in the making, so early American Methodism was a Church in the process of formation, whose development and expansion were to be conditioned by regional, social, and economic environmental factors.

NEW ENGLAND

New England—particularly Connecticut—was known as “the land of steady habits.” Despite the Yankee reputation for shrewdness and cunning New England society—built upon a foundation of principle and law—inculcated in the generally prevailing character of its people a high degree of integrity, sobriety, and industry. Only one capital crime was committed in the whole of New England during the eight years of the Revolutionary War.

New Englanders were a seafaring people and their ships were familiar in every port. An increase in manufacturing, also, followed the war. But by and large agriculture was the chief dependence for a livelihood—at least nine out of ten people digging their living from the land. Even the ministers in open country and village communities had a plot of ground which they diligently tilled.

The New England farm was a family unit and the farmstead was practically self-sufficient. On it was raised most of what the family ate and wore. Agricultural methods were more backward than in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Soil conservation was almost unknown, and wasteful use of the land had so reduced the fertility of the rock-bound farms that already some were considered worn-out. Oxen were the chief work-animals but most of the labor of the farm was performed by human hands. Hired hands were to be had at six to twelve dollars per month—four dollars a month was deemed sufficient for domestic servants—but even that wage was beyond the reach of the average farmer. Farm land, except near the cities, ranged in price from ten to twenty dollars per acre. There was little market demand for farm products. Agriculture was not a profit economy. It was a way of living. If there were few wealthy farmers, there were also few who actually suffered from hunger. The postwar depression, however, caused widespread discontent, with local meetings of protest in Massachusetts—particularly in inland counties—and agrarian demonstrations in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, with complaints also by farmers of Connecticut and Rhode Island.¹⁴

Food in sufficient quantity was assured by nearness to the soil and abundant supply of fish, flesh, and fowl. Doctors were beginning to insist that the prevalent diet had too much meat and too few vegetables. Too often the food was ill cooked—particularly the farmers' meals.

Alcoholic liquors were in common use—as a rule in moderation—so general communities. The Lutherans were largely concerned with people of German ancestry.”—William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, IV, *The Methodists*, p. 51.

ally even among religious people that they were an accompaniment of most ecclesiastic gatherings and were served by ministers of the Standing Order to their callers, both lay and ministerial. It was not counted against so distinguished a minister as the Rev. Nathan Strong of First Church, Hartford, Connecticut, that he owned and conducted a distillery "within sixty rods of his church door."¹⁵

Much of the rural life of New England was lived on the poverty level. Elijah Hedding who for years averaged over three thousand miles' travel annually through Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut was often obliged to depend upon poor people for food and lodging and horse-keeping and although they shared their scanty fare cheerfully and willingly yet he often felt that he "was taking what they needed for their children" and that his horse "was eating what they needed for their own beasts."¹⁶

Yet in most of the homes of "the plain people"—even those of mechanics and laborers—Samuel G. Goodrich testifies simple comfort was to be found, together with a degree of intelligence and a cheerful expectation of advancement in circumstances. Goodrich describes the home of a farmer "on the road leading to Salem." The house was forty feet long, two stories in front, sloping down to a height of ten feet at the rear. There was a carpeted parlor and a sitting room, but the most comfortable room in the house was the kitchen, twenty feet square, with a fireplace six feet wide and four feet deep. The door opened on the well sweep and the garden. Here the three meals of the day were both cooked and served, "save only when the presence of company made it proper to serve tea in the parlor." Upstairs were carpetless bedrooms, their high-posted rope bedsteads with straw ticks, surmounted by others stuffed with goose feathers, homemade linen sheets, quilts and wool coverlets. The narrow garret overhead was hung with the winter's supply of dried fruits, vegetables, and herbs. A deep warm cellar was crowded with barrels of pork in brine, corned beef, cider, and such varieties of apples and vegetables as would keep during the early winter months.¹⁷

Despite its churches and schools—for New England was more generously supplied with both than any other region of the country—moral conditions left much to be desired. There was less of the crass immorality and licentiousness that had characterized the period preceding the Great Awakening but a low moral tone prevailed throughout large areas of the region.¹⁸ Its wide extent, particularly in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine in the early years of the new century, was greatly deplored by Timothy Dwight and other New England religious leaders. The moral and religious effects of the Great Awakening of the second quarter of the century were not enduring and from 1750 to the end of the century "Congregationalism passed into a state of religious and moral indifference."¹⁹

Rural life afforded little in the way of recreation other than hunting, fishing, swimming, skating, and pitching quoits. Social life centered in the home and in the village town hall, tavern, and meeting house.

At the upper level of the social scale were the wealthy retail merchants, the exporters and importers, the land speculators and war-profiteers, and successful lawyers. The merchant aristocracy had succeeded the early colonial theocracy. Next came physicians and members of the learned clergy and, finally, the smaller shopkeepers, business people, and farmers, who were pushing their way up from humble circumstances. Money in New England found ways of rapidly developing into social prestige.

THE MIDDLE STATES

The "American Farmer," Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, had New York in mind when he wrote of an American farming community of freemen—lovers of the soil they tilled—picturing rural simplicity and abundance, trees bending under their load of fruit, overflowing corn cribs and root cellars, barns stuffed with scented hay, homes ringing with the laughter of happy children.²⁰ In the Hudson River Valley were many large estates of which the small farmers of the community were tenants. Along the Hudson Valley lived also many Dutch freeholders who farmed their own acres, with fruitful orchards and well-kept gardens—their houses mostly comfortable stone cottages. The Mohawk Valley also had prosperous settlements with well-built homes, ample barns, fruit orchards, and waving fields of corn. The northern and western part of the state was still for the most part unbroken primeval forest, the undisturbed habitat of wolves, bear, panthers, and wildcats. Making his way along trails through the valley of the Genesee to view the wonders of Niagara, Chateaubriand—thinking to himself "there are no roads here, no towns, no monarchies, no men"—was surprised to come upon the scattered clearings of settlers with well-tilled fields and, in one instance, a prosperous farmer whose farmhouse was furnished with carpets, mirrors, mahogany chairs, and even a piano. But this was exceptional. For one such farmstead there were some hundreds of others in process of being carved out of the wilderness; the house a humble cabin, with little furniture; the family subsisting on meager fare. William Colbert, a Methodist itinerant, in company with Thornton Fleming, in 1793 made an "evangelical exploration" of the Lake Region of western New York:

By the time I rode from Geneva to The Ferry, on the Kauga [Cayuga] Lake, I was very hungry, at the house on the West side of the Lake, I stoped and asked for something to eat, but they told me they had no bread: then as a pot of Pottotoes was by the fire, I was glad to git some of them, with some good Butter, without the bread, but to my great satisfaction while setting over the Pottator pot a man came in with a Bagg of Wheat flour on his back. I then got some bread for the

presant and some to take with me, and it is well I did, for when I crossed the Lake to Captain Harvis's where I lodged, and got supper, they had no bread.²¹

In New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania—while there were many frame structures—houses often were built of stone or of plastered masonry. The years immediately following the Revolution were a time of replacement of old, primitive log cabins by more ample and more imposing homes. More often than not the farmer got the lumber from his own wood lots. Sawmills were within reach of almost everyone but it was still common practice for farmers to hew the beams with a broad-ax and even to saw the boards. In interior Pennsylvania at the close of the century log cabins still predominated, though many were sheathed with pine slabs and the inside rooms often had plain wainscoting, panel doors, and glazed windows. Thomas Cooper thought they compared favorably—"as comfortable, and as clean, and as convenient" as the better cottages of England.²²

In 1791 Hamilton estimated that "two-thirds, three-fourths . . . even four-fifths of all the clothing of the inhabitants . . . [were] made by themselves." A hand loom and a spinning wheel had their necessary places in almost every farmhouse but by the close of the century cloth weaving and shoemaking were often done by craftsmen who went from house to house or took orders for work in their own homes. Besides the finer grades of woolens and linens, linsy-woolsey—mixture of wool and flax—was in common use. Small industries were beginning to be established, some encouraged by state loans or exemption from taxation. Of power industry, gristmills were most numerous.

THE SOUTH

The South presented wider social contrasts than any other region. Within the southern states were to be found extremes of opulence and poverty, magnificence and squalor, elegant mansions and primitive log cabins, semi-tropical gardens brilliant with flowers and decorative shrubs and on the other hand almost impenetrable swamps and clay hills devoid of vegetation.

Agriculture was all in all. The planters of Virginia, South Carolina, and parts of Georgia and North Carolina had developed over a long period a well-established system of plantation agriculture sustained by slave labor. New England and the Middle States had considerable commerce and manufacturing; the southern states had only agriculture. Most of the great plantations bordered the tidewater rivers, though in Virginia there were some also in the valley of the Shenandoah. Many were vast in extent with hundreds of slaves and self-contained villages. But there were also large numbers of small-scale plantations in Maryland, Virginia, and the uplands of the Carolinas and Georgia. With their own hands and those of their sons and a few slaves the owners tilled their small holdings. Others inured to poverty and sustained by

high principles, settled on small farms in the back country and by their own labor sought to wrest a meager living from the stubborn soil. Many of these, finding self-maintenance next to impossible in competition with a slave economy, within a few years pushed farther west.

Chief plantation crops were tobacco, rice, and cotton. Both on plantations and farms numerous other crops and a variety of fruits were raised. Long before an agricultural college was thought of, Thomas Jefferson maintained at Monticello an extensive agricultural laboratory, experimenting with upland rice, almonds, olives, mulberries, peaches, figs, pomegranates, oranges, nectarines, and numerous other fruits and vegetables. Plantation gardens were usually extensive, and some were famous for their arbors and box hedges, their flowering shrubs and trees, and the variety and beauty of their blooming plants. Cattle, hogs, and sheep were raised on the plantations, and much attention was given to horses and horse racing.

Many planters' homes were great mansions, elegantly furnished and maintained luxuriously. Much of the furniture, the paintings, and the musical instruments—pianos, harps, guitars, and flutes—had been brought from Europe. If their owners during the lean post-Revolution years found it difficult to maintain elaborate colonial standards of living, the mansions themselves continued to stand as symbols of a luxury which their owners cherished as an ideal. To these mansions the homes of the small farmers and tenants presented a bizarre contrast. Most of them, even in the towns, were built of logs and the few pieces of furniture were of the crudest sort. In Georgia most of the houses were pole cabins. Writing in 1789 of a journey through Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, Thomas Coke said:

Frequently indeed we were obliged to lodge in houses built with round logs, and open to every blast of wind, and sometimes were under the necessity of sleeping three in a bed.

In the same paragraph Coke refers to the difficulties of travel:

Often we rode sixteen or eighteen miles without seeing a house, or human creature but ourselves, and often were obliged to ford very deep and dangerous rivers, or creeks (as they are here called).²³

As in other things, in the matter of food and drink extremes prevailed. Planters' tables were loaded with meats—beef, pork, and mutton; chicken, turkey, duck, goose, and wild fowl—vegetables, and fruits. Middle-class farmers' tables had less variety but a sufficiency of healthful food. Poor farmers and tenants lived chiefly on salt pork, cornpone, and "taters." Both rich and poor tended to drink whisky to excess: the planters for the pleasure of drinking; the poor "to keep the cold out," to "ward off the ague," and to "drown their misery and sorrows." Asbury had trenchant comments concerning the

prevalence of drinking. At Hillsboro, North Carolina, he wrote: "The snow was deep—the streets dirty—my horse sick—the people drinking and swearing." In Virginia, a few days later, he recorded falling in with a drunken man who "conducted [him] four or five miles." In Maryland he "had a good time at Boardley's, notwithstanding two drunken men came in and made some disturbance." At Sweet's Meeting House, South Carolina, in February, 1790, of a dozen people present, "some were drunk"; a few days later, at P——s, his "spirit was bowed down" for "the love of strong drink carries almost all away"; farther on, two days later, he confessed himself inclined to be done with people who "pass for Christians" but apparently would be better suited with "a prophet of strong drink."²⁴

The use of tobacco was almost universal in the South. The extent and manner of its use grieved the souls of the more strict itinerants, although some of the preachers smoked pipes. William McKendree, in 1790, complained that as soon as the members had left Class meeting—though he had been faithful and plain in admonition, "one had a pipe, another . . . a chew of tobacco, and the women . . . their snuffboxes."²⁵

Coke's *Journal* furnishes an interesting sidelight on food and dietary customs:

The people in general . . . eat only two meals a day; the first about nine in the morning, and the second about four or five in the afternoon. They eat flesh at both meals. Our people in general drink coffee with the first meal, and water with the second. The people of the world drink either coffee or cyder with the first meal, and grog or cyder with the second. Their animal food is almost entirely pig-meat with sometimes shad-fish. I have hardly eat any thing these ten weeks of the flesh kind, except swine's flesh and shad-fish. . . . They have a great variety of fruit-pies, peach, apple, pear, and cranbury, and puddings very often. I esteem it one great blessing, that I prefer the Indian corn to the wheat. Besides, they do not in general manage their wheat properly in the South, so that the wheat-bread is but very indifferent.²⁶

In the planters' families there was an abundance of time for leisure and recreation—for hospitality and visits with relatives and friends, for sports and games, for hunting and fishing, and for horse racing. Monticello on occasion could provide beds for fifty people; the barns, stalls for thirty extra horses. Sometimes as many as four families would arrive at one time, with children and servants, and remain for two or three weeks, being entertained and entertaining themselves with billiards, croquet, bowling-on-the-green, and other games; shooting wild pigeons, larks, and partridges; singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments. Out-of-door activities predominated; a free, hearty, hilarious life. With the poorer people, it was different. For them there was little time and few facilities for recreation.

The plantation system was aristocratic by tradition and practice. Through

the years it had built up—particularly in Virginia and South Carolina—an aristocracy dominant and powerful, a class society based upon blood and property. While it was generous and easy-going, not meaning to be harsh or cruel, it was by nature exclusive and tended to prevent the rise of a middle class and even to push the lower orders to the wall. Of these, thousands

grew up necessitous and friendless, barred from any hope of escape or advance. They had no market for their crops, and they usually had the poorest soil, for they were pushed back to the sand-lands, the pine-barrens and the swamps.²⁷

The aristocratic society of the South reached its culmination in South Carolina. Of all the states its constitution was most autocratic. For a time it even had a peerage of its own, with three orders. Nowhere else was the planter oligarchy so exclusive or so jealous of its power.

By the end of the eighteenth century, however, a new social influence was in evidence. In spite of their severe limitations, among the common people of the South a sharply contrasted social tradition was being developed, nurtured by the preaching of the Methodists and Baptists and by the philosophy of Jefferson and Madison.

THE NEW WEST

The new West, as the South, was dependent upon agriculture. Settled by emigrants from all parts of the country and from many foreign nations, the population was mixed, and no one generalization fits. Peter Cartwright* has left a characterization of the county in Kentucky in which his father settled in 1793:

Logan County, when my father moved to it, was called 'Rogues' Harbor.' Here many refugees, from almost all parts of the Union, fled to escape justice or punishment; for although there was law, yet it could not be executed, and it was a desperate state of society. Murderers, horse thieves, highway robbers, and counterfeiters fled here until they combined and actually formed a majority.²⁸

There were other communities also that were dominated by desperadoes. One such was Powell's Valley, near the Cumberland Gap where Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee meet—a main pathway for immigrants—whose inhabitants for the most part were desperate characters. Jacob Young describes them as wearing short hunting shirts, with leather belts around the waist, carrying shot pouches, powder horns, and guns, each with a big dog following close behind. A gang of them was said to watch the road through the Gap, and, when they saw immigrants coming, to follow along through the mountains until the travelers had pitched their tents and were asleep. They would then fall upon the camp, murder the immigrants, and take their money.²⁹

These widely quoted descriptions of particular local situations have given to

* For estimate of the character and work of Peter Cartwright, see II, ch. VI.

many a distorted perspective of pioneer settlements. No single characterization fits all sections.* Among the hundreds of thousands of emigrants to the western frontier were many of the most honorable and capable people of the eastern frontiers from which they came: farmers, tradesmen, artisans, professional men, families of American officers of the Revolution, members of the exiled French nobility, and many others. However, organized means for maintenance of law and order were few and weak and the lack of regulation contributed to general loosening of moral controls. Even the more stable communities possessed a more or less numerous element of crude, rough, and disorderly people—the rowdy fringe. This element was much given to annoying religious meetings—particularly Camp Meetings. Numerous accounts exist such as that of Jacob Young, referring to a Camp Meeting on Short Creek, Ohio County, Virginia, in 1809:

The rowdies annoyed us exceedingly. They pitched their tents on the hill-sides round about, and sold whisky, brandy, and cider. I visited and conversed with them till I found I could accomplish nothing in that way. I then took a strong man with me and a hammer, went to their tents, knocked in the heads of their casks, and spilled their liquor on the ground.³⁰

In other instances groups of roistering rowdies invaded the meetings. Peter Cartwright has given a vivid narrative of a drunken rabble “armed with dirks, clubs, knives, and horse-whips” who came to a Sunday morning quarterly-meeting service with the intention of breaking up the meeting. “A regular scuffle ensued” in which the mob was put to rout and some thirty prisoners secured and put under guard until Monday morning.³¹

Thomas Ware, one of the most able of the early itinerants and a careful observer, writes of conditions as he found them in 1787 in east Tennessee:

In almost all new settlements there are always some to be found whose principles and practice exert a pestilential influence on the morals of society. In this section there were many of this description—refugees from justice. Some there were who had borrowed money, or were otherwise in debt, and left their creditors and securities to do the best they could. Persons of such principles cannot be expected to exert themselves in promoting order in society. But there were others whose influence was much more pernicious, especially against the introduction and progress of Methodism. These were such as had been guilty of some heinous or scandalous crime, and fled from justice. Some of them had left their wives and were living with other women. . . .³²

In many communities the people were accustomed “to come to meeting” in family groups, the men with guns on their shoulders guarding their wives and

* No contemporary has pictured the unlovely aspects of pioneer life more vividly than James Fenimore Cooper in *The Chainbearer*, *The Prairie*, *Homeward Bound*, and *Home as Found*. The greed, the injustice to the Indians, the slovenliness and shiftlessness that he saw in pioneer squatters such as old Aaron Thousandacres, his vulgar sons and slattern daughters, so offended his moralist principles and embittered his spirit that it was impossible for him to do justice to frontiersmen as a class but these tales do supply a healthy corrective to excessively idealistic portrayals of frontier life and civilization.

children. Henry Smith* was appointed in 1794 to the Clarksburg Circuit in Virginia, west of the mountains. He has left a description of the congregation at his first appointment, fifteen miles west of Clarksburg, as he found it on his arrival:

I looked around and saw one old man who had shoes on his feet. The [local] preacher wore Indian moccasins; every man, woman, and child besides, was bare-footed. Two old women had on what we then called short-gowns, and the rest had neither short nor long gowns. This was a novel sight to me, for a Sunday congregation.³³

Ohio was so largely settled by New England people that it became known—particularly by Kentuckians—as “the Yankee state.” The name “New Connecticut” also was applied to it.† The Ohio immigrants on the whole probably represented a fair cross section of the New England population.‡

At first the development of the West was a slow process. In many sections of the country where the ground was heavily timbered it took from five to seven years of hard labor for the pioneer merely to clear land for a small farm and prepare the ground for tillage. In many places the forest consisted of hardwood trees—such as oak, maple, hickory, and elm—which had to be cut down, most of them burned, and the stumps dug up or left to dry and then burned. In some localities the woods had also a thicket of shrubs and underbrush—hazel, spicebushes, and other types of shrubbery. From three weeks to a month was required for the settler to clear an acre of ground. Prairie land at first was shunned as non-arable—the idea being that if productive it would have been overgrown with forest. But much of the soil, both timbered and prairie, was rich and free of stones and when cleared, brought forth grain, vegetables, and fruit plentifully. Corn, wheat, oats, rye, and barley were the principal grain crops. Razorback hogs were a boon to new settlers for they were capable of protecting themselves fairly well against most of the wild animals, such as bear and wolves; were able to root for a living; and could be quickly fattened on corn and other grain.

Everywhere in the new settlements people who were industrious had an abundance of plain, wholesome food. In addition to what they themselves raised there were squirrel, deer, and wild turkey, as well as wild blackberries and strawberries, in abundance in the woods—bear in many regions—and fish in the larger streams. In some localities honey, stored in bee-trees by wild bees,

* Henry Smith (1769–1863), a native of Maryland, was admitted on trial in 1793 and appointed to the Clarksburg Circuit. He served in the effective ministry for forty-two years. His autobiography, *Recollections and Reflections of an Old Itinerant*, was written in the hope that it “might be of some use to young preachers who complain of hard circuits, rough fare, and poor pay.”

† The name grew out of the fact that in the cessions of territory made to the federal government by the several states that had claimed the Mississippi River as their western boundary, Connecticut had reserved the ownership of a part of northeastern Ohio, later known as “the Western Reserve.”

‡ “Of those who came 89 per cent were of American birth, only 11 per cent foreigners, and of the foreigners two-thirds were Germans.”—I. F. King, “Introduction of Methodism in Ohio,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Publications* (Columbus: 1902), X, 172.

was readily obtainable.* On his way in 1805 to a new appointment, the Marietta Circuit, in Ohio, Jacob Young "tarried all night with a poor family in a little log-cabin." The only food set before him was poor "dried venison, dried pumpkin, and corn-bread."³⁴ Nor was this an uncommon experience—not infrequently the itinerants found the food poor and coarse. Alfred Griffith, appointed in 1806 to the Wyoming Circuit, in Pennsylvania, tells of some of the conditions he found:

The only drink they had besides water was coffee made of buckwheat bread. The process of making this drink was to hold a piece of buckwheat bread, called a slapjack in the fire in the tongs, till completely charred, and then to boil it in an iron pot. The liquor thus obtained, sweetened with maple sugar . . . [was called] 'slapjack coffee.' . . . As to eating, from early in June till autumn, except when on the Flats, they had not a morsel of meat of any kind. Poultry could not be raised, nor pigs, nor sheep, for as soon as anything of the sort made its appearance it was carried off by the foxes, the bears, the panthers, or the wolves.³⁵

This same year, on the Erie Circuit, Robert R. Roberts (two years previously admitted into full connection in the Baltimore Conference and this year ordained an elder) was overtaken by oncoming night some ten miles from a preaching appointment. Unable to discern "the blazes on the trees"³⁶ which marked his course through the forest and coming upon a cabin, he asked shelter for the night, which was cordially granted, although the housewife said they had no bread in the house, nor flour. Supper consisted solely of a plentiful supply of fat bear's meat, boiled with potatoes. Though hungry, Roberts "could eat but very little" and soon after supper he retired—lying on straw spread on the floor before the fire, his saddlebags for a pillow, and his "great-coat for covering." The same dish was set before him for breakfast.³⁷

The drinking of whisky was all but universal in the West. "A house could not be raised," says James B. Finley, "a field of wheat [could not be] cut down, nor could there be a log-rolling, a husking, a quilting, a wedding, or a funeral without the aid of alcohol." Finley's statement is substantiated by that of Peter Cartwright, who affirms that a man who refused to provide whisky at family gatherings, harvesting, house-raisings, and weddings "was considered parsimonious and unsociable," and that many—even professors of Christianity—would not agree to take part in such affairs if a man "did not have spirits and treat the company."³⁸ Whisky and other ardent spirits were commonly prescribed for the prevention and cure of disease—particularly as a preventative of ague and fever. Distilled liquors were used also as tonics.

There were privations of various kinds, and inconveniences without number.

* " . . . the wild bees liked the haunts of men, and preceded their westward advance, before which . . . the buffalo steadily retired. There were old settlers who professed to name the very year when the honey-bee first crossed the Mississippi. . . . It was wonderful to watch him lining a bee on the prairie, taking its range and following it to the faraway tree where its treasures were hoarded in the forest."—Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving*, pp. 277f.

Towns with substantial stores were so few and far between as to be for most of the settlers out of reach. Yankee peddlers followed the emigrants except where they were too widely scattered, with light hardware, knives, clocks, condiments, a few simple remedies, and knickknacks, carried on pack horses.³⁹ But for the most part, whatever was required for use must be homemade. Home-spun clothes were universal both for the men and the women. While life was hard there was little extreme want except among those who were naturally indolent. During the earliest years the pioneers were content with little. As the country became more developed and markets for produce continued to be few and prices for grain, tobacco, pork, and beef remained so low that cash returns were insufficient to meet payments on land and import necessary commodities, considerable agrarian discontent was in evidence. Complaints increased concerning inadequate transportation methods, poor means of marketing, and oppressive financial facilities. Money was scarce and interest rates were exorbitant.⁴⁰

The cabins of the settlers almost universally were built of logs, roughly notched, and laid horizontally. A log cabin could be completed by four to six men in three or four days. The cash outlay amounted to a few dollars. Within a few years the first cabins of round logs gave way to hewed-log cabins more comfortable and more commodious. These, in turn, were followed—again within a few years, if the settler was prosperous—by a frame house. The interior of the frontiersman's cabin was exceedingly plain, with few furnishings. Often the floor was of tamped dirt. Usually there were only two rooms—one with a fireplace. The majority were without windows; some had openings with oiled paper tacked across. The ceiling was low, leaving space beneath the roof for sleeping quarters supplied with bed frames with rawhide or rope bottoms. There were no springs. Mattresses were stuffed with feathers, cornhusks, or straw. The loft was reached by a rough-hewn ladder.⁴¹ Homemade split-bottomed hickory chairs were common. Some of the cabins boasted a cherished chest of drawers, bedstead, three or four chairs, and a few cooking utensils and dishes carried by dint of great effort into the new country from the home in the East. By 1790 Pittsburgh, Marietta, Lexington, and Nashville each had a few skilled artisans—cabinetmakers, cobblers, watchmakers, silversmiths, tailors, and hatters whose services were available to those who lived near enough to engage them and who had money to pay for their labor.

Some of the cabins, despite the paucity of their furnishings, were homes of comfort and simple beauty—places of abode which did credit to the ingenuity and good taste of the settlers. Others, as Asbury testifies in numerous references, were hardly habitable and sometimes filthy.⁴² William Colbert, whose Circuit in 1792 was in the Tioga region of Pennsylvania, tells of being more

than once compelled to sleep "at night in a wretched cabin," with his head "in the chimney corner." On one occasion, he says:

At Wigdon's at Mashopin I call'd [for] something for my horse, some smoky dirty corn was brought, but as for myself—I thought, I would stay a little longer before I got anything to eat in such a filthy place. I talk'd to the nasty dirty woman that was setting over the ashes with 3 or 4 nasty children, by a stinking bed in the chimney corner something about the things respecting the Salvation of her soul,—She was kind—she took nothing for what I had. So I proceeded on my journey. . . .⁴³

With the indolent the privations which at first had been "the offspring of necessity" became a habit. The ornithologist, Alexander Wilson, noticed this during his travels in 1810. Some squatters among the early settlers, while boasting loudly of the fertility of the land, were content to throw seed into the ground, neglect its cultivation, turn the hogs loose in the woods and live "on pork, cabbages and hoe cakes."⁴⁴

Despite its limitations and deprivations, pioneer life was healthful and conducive to the development of rugged physique in both men and women but, owing to the lack of knowledge of the ordinary laws of health and hygiene among people generally, there were many early deaths. Tuberculosis was common and the death rate among children, due to epidemics of diphtheria, scarlet fever, and smallpox, was high.

Despite the probity of character of the majority of pioneers, crimes of violence were relatively numerous. Witness to the fact is borne by court records of "assaults and batteries," types of crime to which the prevalent heavy drinking of whisky contributed. The widely scattered population and the few existing legal means of law enforcement gave slight chance for effective control either through community opinion or legal process. A few court judges were "on circuit," itinerating much as the Methodist Circuit Riders. Partly because of the comparative infrequency of court sessions, pioneer justice tended to be rough and ready. The settlers considered themselves capable of managing their own affairs and they preferred to do so, even in the administration of justice—holding that the opinion of the majority had all the force of law. Among them the sovereignty of the popular will attained new validity. In the courts, sentences for crime often were severe. James Quinn,* an early itinerant, describing conditions in the Redstone country, near the close of the century, says:

new and frontier as was the country, and still subject to savage depredations, it was not a moral waste; for there were laws, courts, judges, and magistrates. And in

* James Quinn (1775–1847), born in Pennsylvania of Irish ancestry, was received on trial in 1799, appointed to the Greenfield (western Pa.) Circuit, and in 1804 transferred to the Western Conference. He was a Circuit preacher for twenty-two years, held appointments to Stations for six years, and served as Presiding Elder twelve years. He had a significant part in the building of Methodism in the Ohio Valley.—J. F. Wright, *Sketches of the Life and Labors of James Quinn*.

those days they whipped, cropped, branded, and hung men for stealing; and fined and imprisoned for swearing [and] Sabbath-breaking. . . .⁴⁵

There were not many schools, although in some settlements the people managed to maintain one of a sort. Because of scarcity of schools formal education was impossible for most children.⁴⁶ There was little reading, for means of circulation of books and newspapers were not in existence. A few books were carried by the peripatetic peddlers—among them the *Journal* of Lorenzo Dow, popular reading in pioneer settlements. Recreation consisted chiefly of hunting, fishing, and dancing.

The western Indians, most of whom were allies of England during the Revolutionary War, resented arbitrary transfer of their lands to the immigrants. In some instances Indian tribes resisted and for years were hostile. Kentucky and Tennessee pioneers were frequently attacked by bands of the Cherokee and Creek. Raids on exposed settlements were frequent, in some cases entirely wiping them out. As means of protection "stations" were constructed—enclosures of one-or two-story log cabins or blockhouses, with connecting stockades—places of refuge for occupants of outlying farms. From 1786 to 1795 the pioneer settlements in the Illinois country were so harassed by hostile Indians that families were at times compelled to live in "stations," prevented from carrying on their farm work and from caring for their cattle.⁴⁷ In some areas of other western and southern states relations between the Indians and the white settlers were entirely friendly, but in others the frontier families lived for years in constant danger. Sometimes Indians attacked settlements while the people were assembled in a cabin or barn to hear a Circuit Rider. Thomas Ware tells of such an incident. While he was preaching in a settler's cabin in east Tennessee in the winter of 1788 an excited cry of "Indians" was heard from without:

Instantly every man flew to his rifle, and sallied forth to ascertain the ground of alarm. On coming out we saw two lads running with all speed, and screaming, 'The Indians have killed mother!'⁴⁸

They had been lurking in a canebrake, and when the people had gone to the preaching service one had slyly crept up behind the woman who had stayed behind and killed her with his tomahawk before she knew of her danger. In other instances itinerants on their lone rounds were attacked and in some cases murdered. The dense forests through which the narrow, winding trails were made gave abundant opportunity for the enemy to lie in ambush and to perpetrate surprise attacks. It was believed necessary to provide Asbury with a bodyguard on some of his journeys. Peter Cartwright says:

Several times the Western preachers had to arm themselves in crossing the mountains to the East, and guard Bishop Asbury through the wilderness, which was infested with bloody, hostile savages, at the imminent risk of all their lives.⁴⁹

Asbury himself refers a number of times in his *Journal* to these journeys. In April, 1793, itinerating in Tennessee, he writes:

Saturday, 6. If reports be true, there is danger in journeying through the wilderness; but I do not fear—we go armed. . . .

Monday, 8. Our guard appeared, fixed, and armed, for the wilderness. We came down to E——'s . . . thence to R——'s, where I found the reports relative to the Indians were true—they had killed the post and one or two more, and taken some prisoners. I had not much thought or fear about them.⁵⁰

Hundreds of settlers were killed or carried into captivity by the attacks of Indians upon the frontier settlements. The early government military expeditions did not suffice to bring order—some meeting with disastrous defeat. Not until the decisive victory of General Anthony Wayne over the Miami Confederacy in August, 1794, and the ensuing treaty, did the sporadic attacks cease.⁵¹

WESLEY'S DECISIVE ACTION

The achievement of independence by the colonies brought more than political freedom to America. It brought also an increased measure of religious liberty. Agitation in the colonies for complete separation of Church and State had been gradually growing for years—since the beginning of the Revolution at an accelerated rate. In New York and Maryland disestablishment of the Anglican Church preceded by several years the close of the war. When the end of British rule came it was widely recognized that political independence sounded the knell of State control of the Church. No one saw this more clearly than John Wesley. The Revolution that had resulted in political freedom for the American people, in effect, called also for religious freedom. Loyal to the core to the Established Church of England, as he was, he was not a man to close his eyes to an accomplished fact. The American people had achieved their political independence; American Methodists could no longer be held to dependence upon the Established Church of England. He not only saw this. He was prepared boldly and clearly to declare it: "Our American brethren," he wrote, "are now totally disentangled both from the state and the English hierarchy." Moreover, under the changed circumstances he did not propose to be a party to compromising their new freedom. "If they [the English Bishops] would ordain them [the Methodist preachers] now," he said, "they would likewise expect to govern them." As for himself, his course was fixed: "we dare not entangle them again."⁵² The implication of this for his own relationship to the Methodists in America he also saw—although the habit of years made it very difficult for him to keep it in mind and to govern himself accordingly—from henceforth he could no longer command but only advise, and that on their request.

Of all this, none was by his own choice. It was by an act of God: "a very uncommon train of providences"—and he would not contend against God. As for themselves, he would urge "that they stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."⁵³

The fact is that the outcome of the War of Independence had forced Wesley's hand and compelled a change of attitude. Throughout his life he had been steadfast in his conviction that the Methodist Societies should not separate from the Church of England. He was deeply devoted to the communion of the Anglican Church. He was in accord for the most part with the doctrines. He valued its liturgy. While the spiritual barrenness and moral delinquencies of many of its Bishops gave him deep concern he apparently never seriously contemplated attempting reform of the hierarchial system. He firmly resisted the pressure for separation brought to bear upon him in England by many of his preachers and members of the Methodist Societies.⁵⁴ So also in his relations with the Methodist Movement in America. Even when during the early years of the Revolution the connection of England with the colonies had been broken and a colonial government formed he was unwilling to consent to the setting up of a separate Church. Determinative in this attitude were the convictions that had governed his course in England. He not only was sentimentally devoted to the Anglican establishment, he knew that it represented values that should not be lightly regarded. In spite of all its shortcomings

the Church had continuity of history, a reach over all England, a body of doctrines substantially agreed upon, a priesthood which could at least be trained into effectiveness. He knew that there was a living body there, no matter how weak and debilitated it might for the moment be. . . . He knew the worth of ecclesiastical results achieved through centuries; he knew that, if these were lightly left behind in separation, it would take centuries for the new body to develop them anew.⁵⁵

Factors, pro and con, other than these, influenced Wesley. The attitude of the English Bishops in relation to the Methodist Societies was inexcusable. When the break came, they had only themselves to blame—a fact that has been recognized by more than one historian of the Anglican Church.* Before committing himself irrevocably in ordaining Coke, Wesley made a final appeal to the learned Robert Lowth, then Bishop of London, whom he had reason to believe to be a man of liberal mind and generous sympathies, begging him to ordain at least one preacher who might travel among the American Societies and administer the sacraments—naming a man earnest and well

* S. D. McConnell: "Wesley besought Lowth, Bishop of London, to ordain at least two priests who could administer the Sacraments to American Methodists. It is doubtful if any single action of a bishop has ever been more fruitful for evil than his refusal. . . . The Church in America lost the most active part of its membership at the very time when it was about to need them most. . . . Had the Bishop hearkened to Wesley's earnest prayer . . . the division would probably have been averted. But he had refused and the mischief was done."—*History of the American Episcopal Church* (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1904), pp. 170, 172, 291.

qualified for such a ministry. But Lowth refused a second time saying: "There are three ministers in that country already." Wesley was then eighty-one but the pungent quality of his answer to the Bishop gives the lie to the oft-reiterated statement that when he made his decision he was in a state of near senility and did not realize the significance of his action:

Will your Lordship permit me to speak freely? . . . I am on the verge of the grave and know not the hour when I shall drop into it. Suppose there were threescore of these missionaries in the country, could I in conscience recommend these souls to their care? Do they take any care of their own souls? . . . both I and they know what manner of men the far greater part of these are. They are men who have neither the power of religion nor the form—men that lay no claim to piety or even decency. . . . your Lordship did not see good to ordain *him* [the man whom the Bishop earlier had turned down for want of knowledge of Greek and Latin]; but your Lordship did see good to ordain and send into America other persons who knew something of Greek and Latin; but who knew no more of saving souls than of catching whales.⁵⁶

This letter carries within itself evidence that Wesley knew what he was about, and after long consideration had made up his mind. His hesitation had undoubtedly been due in part to lack of confidence in the ability of Asbury and his associates successfully to carry through so difficult an undertaking as he conceived the task to be. More than once—as when he sent Rankin to America—he had shown lack of complete confidence in Asbury. The feeling to which he had long before given expression (1758) in his *Reasons Against a Separation from the Church of England* doubtless still had a place in his mind:

to form the plan of a new Church would require infinite time and care . . . with much more wisdom and greater depth and extensiveness of thought than any of us are masters of.⁵⁷

There come times when events take decisions out of the hands of men and such a time had come with regard to the relation of American Methodism to the Church of England. The independence of the colonies made the severing of all connection of the American Methodist Societies with the Established Church of England inevitable. The setting apart of Thomas Coke was simply the recognition on Wesley's part of that which was already essentially an accomplished fact. It is an evidence of Wesley's clear-sightedness that he was able to see this.

The essential facts of Wesley's decisive action have been so often recorded and are so familiar as scarcely to need repetition here. Stated in the fewest possible words they are these. In February, 1784, Wesley called Coke into his private room in City Road, London, and stated to him his view of the changed situation brought about by the outcome of the War of Independence. He then expressed his admiration for the mode of ordaining Bishops which

the Church of Alexandria had practiced: "that the presbyters of that venerable apostolic church, on the death of a bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body, by the laying on of their own hands." Finally he said that, being himself a presbyter, it was his desire and purpose to ordain him [Coke] after which he should "proceed in that character to the continent of America, to superintend the societies in the United States."⁵⁸ Coke seemed unprepared for so radical a step and asked time for consideration of the proposal. About two months later he wrote Wesley saying "that he was ready to cooperate with him in any way that was calculated to promote the glory of God and the good of souls."

At the Conference in Leeds, July 27, 1784, Wesley declared his intention of sending Coke and some other preachers to America. Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey "offered themselves as missionaries for that purpose and were accepted."⁵⁹

Concerning the ordination of Coke possibly Wesley's mind had wavered. At any rate Coke on August 9 was moved to write to him, saying:

The more maturely I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me, *that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you* by the imposition of your hands . . . my exercising the office of ordination without that *formal* authority may be disputed, if there be any opposition on any other account; I could therefore earnestly wish you would exercise that power, in this instance, which, I have not the shadow of a doubt, but God hath invested you with for the good of our connexion. . . .⁶⁰

Following the Leeds Conference Wesley communicated with Coke, who was in London, asking him to meet him in Bristol and to bring with him James Creighton, a presbyter of the Church of England with whom Wesley had conferred concerning what was in his mind.⁶¹ The two clergymen, together with Whatcoat and Vasey, met Wesley in Bristol on September 2, 1784, where with the assistance of Coke and Creighton he ordained Whatcoat and Vasey presbyters for America. Then, with Creighton's assistance, he ordained Thomas Coke a Superintendent, "giving him letters of ordination under his hand and seal."⁶²

Wesley's action brought down upon his head a storm of objections and criticism, no one expressing more bitter protest than Charles Wesley. But he had counted the cost before acting and his defense was as vigorous as the attack. He recognized clearly that he was violating the constitutional law of the Church of England. "If any one is minded to dispute concerning Diocesan Episcopacy, he may, but I have better work."⁶³ He wrote to his brother that he believed himself to be as truly a scriptural *ἐπισκοπος* as any man in England. He added, "the *uninterrupted succession* I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove."⁶⁴

Some have contended that Wesley's "feeble judgment" (sic) was overborne by the ambition and insistence of Coke.⁶⁵ Any such contention rests upon slender foundation of evidence so far as Coke is concerned and certainly is not borne out by anything that Wesley himself wrote or said. His letter to Barnabas Thomas under date of March 25, 1785, states the whole case succinctly and clearly:

Dear Barnabas,—I have neither inclination nor leisure to draw the saw of controversy; but I will tell you my mind in a few words.

I am now as firmly attached to the Church of England as I ever was since you knew me. But meantime I know myself to be as real a Christian bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury. Yet I was always resolved, and am so still, never to act as such except in case of necessity. Such a case does not (perhaps never will) exist in England. In America it did exist. This I made known to the Bishop of London and desired his help. But he peremptorily refused it. All the other bishops were of the same mind; the rather because (they said) they had nothing to do with America. Then I saw my way clear, and was fully convinced what it was my duty to do. As to the persons amongst those who offered themselves I chose those whom I judged most worthy, and I positively refuse to be judged herein by any man's conscience but my own.—I am, dear Barnabas, Your affectionate brother.⁶⁶

It should also be remembered that twelve years before Coke's ordination Wesley had written his friend Walter Sellon that in case he should go to America he was prepared to act as Bishop. The letter was explicit:

You do not understand your information right. Observe, 'I am going to America to turn bishop.' You are to understand it *in sensu composito* [in the sense agreed]. I am not to be a bishop till I am in America. While I am in Europe, therefore, you have nothing to fear. But as soon as ever you hear of my being landed at Philadelphia, it will be time for your apprehensions to revive. . . . I keep my old rule, *Festina lente* [make haste slowly].⁶⁷

Furnished with Wesley's credentials, on September 18, 1784, "at ten in the morning" Coke, accompanied by Whatcoat and Vasey, set sail from "King-Road for New-York" on his eventful mission.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ORGANIZED

The three commissioners landed in New York on November 3 "after a very agreeable voyage" and within a few days proceeded by way of Philadelphia to Delaware where on November 14 Coke for the first time met Francis Asbury. In his *Journal* Asbury describes the meeting:

Sunday 14. I came to Barratt's chapel: here, to my great joy, I met these dear men of God, Dr. Coke and Richard Whatcoat. We were greatly comforted together. . . . I was shocked when first informed of the intention of these my brethren in coming to this country: it may be of God. . . . The design of organizing the Methodists into an independent Episcopal Church was opened to the preachers present, and it was agreed to call a general conference, to meet at Baltimore the ensuing

Christmas; as also that brother Garrettson go off to Virginia to give notice thereof to the brethren in the south.⁶⁸

Meanwhile after a brief "private conversation" with Asbury "on the future management of our affairs in America" Coke set off on an extensive preaching tour arranged for him, in advance of his arrival, by Asbury. The itinerary of a thousand miles through Delaware, Virginia, and Maryland completed, on December 14 Coke and Asbury met again and spent several days at Perry Hall planning for the forthcoming Conference. On Friday, the twenty-third, they rode to Baltimore and conferred with a few of the preachers. In this informal meeting it was agreed to form "an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons." At ten o'clock in the morning of December 24, 1784, the Christmas Conference was convened in Lovely Lane Chapel with Coke as president. About sixty of the eighty-three preachers were present.* The Conference continued in session for ten days. Apparently no official minutes, as such, were recorded.† Asbury's reference to the Conference is astonishingly brief:

. . . When the conference was seated, Dr. Coke and myself were unanimously elected to the superintendency of the Church, and my ordination followed, after being previously ordained deacon and elder,‡ as by the following certificate may be seen. . . . Twelve elders were elected. . . . We spent the whole week in conference, debating freely, and determining all things by a majority of votes. The Doctor preached every day at noon, and some one of the other preachers morning and eventime. *Monday, January 3, 1785.* The conference is risen, and I have now a little time for rest.⁶⁹

Jesse Lee's account likewise gives a minimum of information:

At this conference we formed ourselves into a regular church, by the name of *The Methodist Episcopal Church*; making at the same time the Episcopal office elective, and the elected superintendent amenable to the body of ministers and preachers.⁷⁰

* No complete list of those present exists. John Lednum in his *History of the Rise of Methodism in America* . . . says, "The following ministers were certainly in attendance: Thomas Coke, LL.D., Francis Asbury, Richard Whatcoat, Thomas Vasey, Freeborn Garrettson, William Gill, Reuben Ellis, LeRoy Cole, Richard Ivey, James O'Kelley, John Hagerty, Nelson Reed, James O. Cromwell, Jeremiah Lambert, John Dickins, William Glendenning, Francis Poythress, Joseph Everett, William Black of N.S., William Phoebus, and Thomas Ware." (p. 413.) John Atkinson in the *Centennial History of American Methodism*, (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1884), ch. II, supplies documentary evidence of attendance of eight preachers not mentioned by Lednum: Edward Dromgoole, Ira Ellis, Jonathan Forrest, Lemuel Green, John Smith, William Watters, Ignatius Pigman, and Caleb Boyer. The ms. "Journal" of Thomas Haskins, in the Library of Congress, proves that he also was present throughout the session. Though there were eminent Methodist laymen nearby who had done much to advance the cause, none was invited to attend. The counsel in the deliberations of the Conference of such men as Richard Bassett, Thomas White, and Henry D. Gough would have been invaluable, as it was freely available, but it was unsought—to the great loss of the Movement as, within a few years, became apparent. (Cf. Peter G. Mode, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*, [New York: Macmillan, 1923] pp. 123, 128f.)

† Abel Stevens: "There are no official records or Minutes of this Conference except the preliminary reference to it in the Minutes [of the Annual Conferences] of 1785, and the Discipline, as published after the Conference."—*History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*. . . II, 184n.

‡ Thomas Coke's sermon at the ordination of Asbury, in what might be said to have been the charge to the Bishop, declared in prophetic vein: "Do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of thy ministry; and thy God will open to thee a wide door, which all thy enemies shall not be able to shut. He will carry His Gospel by thee from sea to sea, and from one end of the continent to another."—J. W. Etheridge, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, D.C.L.* (London: John Mason, 1860), p. 116.

The Conference adjourned, it seems, on Sunday afternoon or evening. Coke and Asbury had done well their work of detailed preparation and few changes were made in what they proposed. Of particular interest is the fact that Asbury, from the day of his first meeting with Coke, had refused to accept Wesley's designation of him as Superintendent unless he should be elected by the preachers of their own free choice. The title, "Methodist Episcopal Church of America," was adopted on motion of John Dickins. Elders and deacons, it was decided, should be elected to orders by the vote of the Conference, "a negative voice" being allowed by the Superintendent. Three days—Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday—were given over to determining the rules of discipline. On Saturday the project of founding a Methodist college, proposed some time previously by John Dickins, was discussed. On Sunday, twelve of the men earlier elected and ordained deacons, were ordained elders. All references to the proceedings agree that everything was done in peace and harmony. It appears probable that no dissenting vote was cast during the entire session. Thomas Ware, who was present as a participant in the Conference, bears testimony to the remarkable spirit which prevailed throughout:

. . . for many reasons, it was sublime. During the whole time of our being together in the transaction of business of the utmost magnitude, there was not, I verily believe, on the conference floor or in private, an unkind word spoken, or an unbrotherly emotion felt. Christian love predominated. . . . The announcement of the plan devised by him [Wesley] for our organization as a church* filled us with solemn delight. It answered to what we did suppose, during our labours and privations, we had reason to expect our God would do for us; for in the integrity of our hearts we verily believed his design in raising up the preachers called Methodists, in this country, was to reform the continent, and spread scriptural holiness through these lands. . . . ⁷¹

Some of the preachers did not fully share Ware's feeling, but were oppressed by fears and misgivings. Thomas Haskins regarded Wesley, he says in his "Journal," as "a great good judicious & sensible man," but not infallible, "particularly with respect to the political, civil & religious affairs of America"; he considered it desirable "as generous & dutiful sons of the Episcopal Church" to lay Wesley's proposal before as many of the clergy as possible, and "to make some offers to continue a Union"; fearing that otherwise Methodist preachers might "be stigmatized by the sober and judicious . . . as

* Ware's words, "the plan devised by him for our organization as a church," are misleading. Wesley's communications sent by the hands of Coke included no specific plan for the future of the American Societies. He left the new Superintendents and the preachers free to proceed as they deemed best. He admonished them "all to be determined to abide by the Methodist doctrine and discipline"; . . . "to beware of Preachers coming from Gt. Britain or Ireland without a full recommendation from me"; "not to receive any Preachers, however recommended, who will not be subject to the American Conference," nor "to receive any who make any difficulty in receiving Francis Asbury as the General Assistant." He sent also a Liturgy, based upon the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England bearing the comment: "I recommend [it] to our Societies in America" (The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America . . . , London: 1784). These are general counsels, not a definite plan of organization. The words used, however, do clearly imply anticipation on Wesley's part that the Societies would continue in connexion with him.

hunters after power & disturbers of the peace & good order of the Church and State."⁷²

Thus was the Methodist Episcopal Church organized—destined within a century to be one of the great Protestant bodies of the nation and the world—the first religious group in the United States to form an independent, national organization.* A truly remarkable event it was, considering the fact that the Methodists constituted one of the smallest of the minority religious groups in the country and were without an educated or trained religious leadership. They did not have, says William Warren Sweet,

a college graduate among the whole number of their preachers . . . nor . . . a single ordained minister . . . and even their places of worship were not designated as churches but were called chapels or meeting houses. . . .⁷³

While the Christmas Conference by designating itself "the General Conference" made a distinction between itself and the Annual Conferences previously held for eleven years in succession it made, strange to say, no provision for another session. Three Annual Conferences, it was agreed, should be held each year—a number soon found to be too few. The second General Conference was not held until 1792, when it was constituted a body with legislative powers to meet quadrennially.

Of equal importance with organization as a Church is the fact that, with the Christmas Conference, Methodism began the process of systematically rooting itself in American soil. In pre-revolutionary days it was largely an importation from England. It was directed from overseas by John Wesley. Its preachers were English missionaries or American immigrants born in England ("assistants" of Wesley, they were called). Denied recognition by the Established Churches of the colonies and deprived of the sacraments, the Societies were ecclesiastically orphaned. The Christmas Conference changed all this; an organization was formed, which speedily became an indigenous American Church, an integral part of the national life, rooted in the social soil of the new world.

Following the adjournment of the Christmas Conference—after taking "a little time for rest" on Monday, January 3—Asbury resumed his ceaseless itinerating, beginning on Tuesday by riding "fifty miles through frost and snow

* However, the ambitious claim of Abel Stevens cannot be historically justified. Stevens says: "The Methodist bishops were the first Protestant bishops, and Methodism was the first Protestant Episcopal Church of the New World; and as Wesley had given it the Anglican Articles of Religion (omitting the seventeenth, on predestination) and the Liturgy, wisely abridged, it became, both by its precedent organization and its subsequent numerical importance, the real successor to the Anglican Church in America." (*Op. cit.*, II, 166.) Samuel Seabury was consecrated a Bishop on Nov. 14, 1784, in Aberdeen, Scotland, "by three of the four non-juring bishops then alive in Scotland. . . ." (E. Clowes Chorley, *Men and Movements in the American Episcopal Church* [New York, Scribners, 1946], p. 138.) This was more than a month before the convening of the Christmas Conference. Moreover the Church, independently of nomenclature and form of organization, had continuity of existence from colonial times through the Revolution and the post-revolutionary years until its reorganization as the American Episcopal Church.—Cf. William W. Manross, *A History of the American Episcopal Church*, ch. ix.

to Fairfax, Virginia." Coke* went first to Abingdon, Maryland, on business connected with the founding of Cokesbury College, from thence to Philadelphia and New York, and then began another extensive preaching tour through New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and again Virginia—ending at Baltimore, where on June 1, 1785, an Annual Conference convened. Throughout the journey he was active in behalf of the various causes—raising funds for Cokesbury and for the building of a new church in Baltimore (the original Light Street House), agitation for the freeing of the slaves, and other activities. On June 2 he "took leave of [his] friends" and embarked for England.⁷⁴

MISSIONARY SPIRIT OF THE NEW CHURCH

From the period of its colonial beginnings American Methodism had been pre-eminently a missionary movement. "In 1771," wrote Francis Asbury, "I came a missionary to the British Provinces in America." The organization of the new Church accentuated the missionary spirit.⁷⁵ To the day of his death, forty-five years later, Asbury continued to think of his work as missionary service, and to regard the Circuit Riders whom he sent to the frontier as missionaries. "I preached three times [in Baltimore]" he records in his *Journal* on Sunday, May 30, 1786, "and made a collection to defray the expenses of sending missionaries to the western settlements."† In August, 1792, at a Conference in Albany, New York, he says, "We appointed Jonathan Newman as a missionary to the whites and Indians on the frontiers." Again near the close of his life (1815) he says that the Methodist preachers sent by Wesley to America "came as missionaries," and continues, "now behold the consequences of this mission."⁷⁶

The early American itinerants preceding and following the organization of the Church shared Asbury's view. The autobiographical notes and *Journals* which they left present indubitable evidence of this fact. Thomas Ware, whose ministry began in 1775, stated that "Methodism has been from the beginning a peculiarly missionary system."‡ In his autobiography he relates a conver-

* Of the activities of Coke's fellow commissioners, Vasey and Whatcoat, in relation to the Christmas Conference, we have no record. Thomas Vasey, who in England had sacrificed a considerable patrimony and a life of ease for the hardships of the Methodist itinerancy, had been a Traveling Preacher for about nine years when he was ordained a presbyter and sent to America. He labored in America only about two years. During this time "he was induced to accept reordination" at the hands of Bishop William White of Philadelphia. Returning to England he became a curate in the Church of England, but in 1789 associated himself again with Wesley and continued a zealous and faithful itinerant until his eighty-fourth year. Of Whatcoat's career in America we shall have more to say in a later section.

† Early in his ministry Asbury adopted the plan of circulating annually a "Mite Subscription," carrying it with him on his round of Circuit preaching. No person was expected to give more than one dollar and some contributed as little as a "fi' penny bit" (six and a fourth cents). He used the fund for various benevolent purposes but in the latter years of his life chiefly for sending missionaries to the French, German, and Spanish populations. His last list, "Mite Subscription Opened and Continued for the Year 1816," with his own subscription at the head, is in the Drew University Library.

‡ John Mason Peck: "*A System of itinerant missions, or 'circuit preaching,' as our Methodist friends call it, is the most economical and successful mode of supplying the destitute and strengthening and building up feeble churches that has been tried. It is truly the apostolic mode; and if the finger of*

sation with a clerical opponent who overtook him as he was riding and inquired if he was a missionary. "I replied," says Ware, "that I was a Methodist, and we were all missionaries."⁷⁷ In 1789, at the Conference held in New York, Jesse Lee offered "himself as a missionary" to New England and was appointed to the Stamford Circuit—at that time non-existent—"a missionary experiment of a most arduous and unpromising character."⁷⁸ In a sketch furnished by John Kobler to the Western Historical Society he says that in the year 1798 he "was sent by Bishop Asbury as a missionary" to that section of the country "called the North-Western Territory" in order "to form a new circuit, and to plant the first principles of the Gospel."⁷⁹ In 1805 Thomas Lasley and Caleb W. Cloud were appointed to the Mississippi District, Western Conference, and "in consequence of their Mission to the Natchez" were "after one year of their probation" both "elected and ordained to the office of Deacon" and admitted into full connection in the Conference.⁸⁰ Referring to his itinerant ministry in New England, Elijah Hedding* wrote: "Much of the time I have done missionary work without missionary money."⁸¹

And, in fact, every Methodist Circuit Rider who shared the pioneering zeal of Asbury, riding his long Circuit, many of which were three hundred to six hundred miles in length—many of them preaching daily for weeks at a time—was in deed and truth a missionary.† The terms "preacher" and "missionary" seem to have been commonly used interchangeably. In the *General Minutes* for 1780, George Mair appears, assigned as "preacher" on the Philadelphia Circuit. But in his autobiographical sketches Thomas Ware speaks of a Quarterly Meeting "held by our missionary George Mair."⁸² Again, in describing the preachers present at the Christmas Conference, Ware speaks of "the placid Tunnell," "the philosophical Gill," and "the pathetic Pedicord," and says that it would be difficult to determine "to which of these primitive missionaries . . . the preference should be given."⁸³ On Methodism's roll of martyrs a revered name is that of Richmond Nolley. An itinerant for several

Divine providence ever pointed out a method adapted to the circumstances of new and sparsely-settled districts, it is itinerating or circuit missions." (Rufus Babcock, *Memoir of John Mason Peck*, p. 124.) Also Colin B. Goodykoontz: "It is doubtful if a missionary system better adapted to the needs of the frontier in the early part of the nineteenth century could have been found than that used by the Methodist Episcopal Church. . . . The Methodist Circuit Riders were the advance guard of American Christianity in the occupation of the West. The Methodists have probably influenced the lives of more persons than any other Protestant body in America, and what is equally important, their influence was exerted in the formation period in countless frontier communities."—*Home Missions on the American Frontier* (Caldwell, Ida.: Caxton Printers, 1939), pp. 161ff.

* For estimate of the life and work of Elijah Hedding, see II, ch. VI.

† Stephen Olin: "It is true, and must often be repeated, that the itinerancy is a missionary system. To the efficiency of the missionary principle, inherent in her constitution, is the Methodist Episcopal Church indebted for her extension and prosperity, and to it, more than to all other causes combined, is this nation indebted for that timely interference which has saved the whole region west and southwest of the Alleghany Mountains from the ineffable curse of an infidel and semi-heathen population. The peculiar organization of the Methodist ministry has enabled them, without embarrassment, and without a single anomalous movement, by the mere expansion of their system of operations, to carry the Gospel into new settlements and accompany the adventurous emigrant to his most distant abode. . . . What by other Churches are denominated domestic missions, constitute, to a large extent, the regular field of labor of the Methodist ministry in the new states and territories."—*The Life and Letters of Stephen Olin* . . . (New York: Harpers, 1854), I, 172.

years in the Carolinas the *General Minutes* record his appointment in 1812 as senior preacher on the Tombeckbee (Tombigbee) Circuit in Mississippi. But the same *Minutes* also say that "in compliance with the request of the bishop, he went on a mission to Tombeckbee."* And Joseph Travis, in his *Autobiography*, says that he (Richmond Nolley) "was sent a missionary to . . . the far-off Mississippi."⁸⁴

Each of the three pre-eminent early historians of Methodism conforms to this usage. Nathan Bangs declares "the itinerating ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church" to be "the most extensive and energetic missionary system in existence. . . ."⁸⁵ Jesse Lee, in his *Short History of the Methodists*, under the year 1791, writes of several "preachers" locating, among them James Haw, "the first missionary to Kentucky. . . ."⁸⁶ Abel Stevens in characterizing the work of John Major, who died in 1788, as "surpassingly popular, without as well as within the Church," refers to him as constrained by Christ's passion for the lost, "one of the earliest missionaries" of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Georgia. Jesse Lee also refers to him as "one of the first missionaries" sent by the Church to Georgia, and adds "He was a useful preacher." Like these men, many other Circuit Riders were impelled by a divine urgency to seek the neglected and the lost. We cannot, like the Church of England, the Presbyterian, and other Churches, leave multitudes unsought, declared Asbury:

'Go,' says the command, 'go into all the world'—go to the highway and hedges. *Go out*—seek them. Christ came seeking the lost sheep.⁸⁷

The period called for just such a zealous missionary movement. Following the Revolution religious life was at a low ebb throughout the country:

The long struggle for independence had turned man's attention away from religion. War had brought a lowering of morals. Independence had weakened many of the old institutions. The chilling Deism of Europe made itself felt.⁸⁸

In the area of the thirteen original states there was no lack of religious organizations. Well-established Protestant denominations included the Protestant Episcopalians, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Reformed Dutch, the Baptists, the Moravians, and the Friends. The German Reformed and Lutherans were at work among German immigrants. Present also was the Roman Catholic Church, though very weak.† But the number of denominations offers little indication of prevailing religious conditions. The two decades

* After two years of difficult faithful service on the Tombeckbee Circuit, in 1814 he was appointed to the Attakapas Circuit in Louisiana where in the course of an extremely hazardous journey by night in late November he was overcome by cold and exposure and was found the next day lying at full length on the ground, rigid in death.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 275f; Abel Stevens, *op. cit.*, IV, 417ff.

† "According to an official 'Relation on the State of Religion in the United States,' presented by the prefect apostolic in 1785, the total number of Catholics in the entire Union was 18,200, exclusive of an unascertainable number, destitute of priests, in the Mississippi Valley. The entire number of clergy was twenty-four. . . ."—*History of American Christianity*, Leonard W. Bacon, p. 214.

following the close of the Revolutionary War probably represent "the period of the lowest ebb-tide of vitality in the history of American Christianity." Spiritual torpor was so widely prevalent that many regarded Christianity as a spent force. Spiritual deadness characterized the membership of most of the churches.* In 1801, after fourteen years of service, Bishop Provoost of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of New York relinquished his office, convinced that the diocese would "die out with the old colonial families."⁸⁹ Among Congregationalists and Presbyterians long-drawn-out doctrinal controversy continued, undermining spiritual vitality, while the revolt against Calvinism steadily gained strength. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1798 addressed a pastoral letter to the membership declaring:

The profligacy and corruption of the public morals have advanced with a progress proportioned to our declension in religion. Profaneness, pride, luxury, injustice, intemperance, lewdness, and every species of debauchery and loose indulgence greatly abound.

The Convention of Massachusetts Congregational clergymen the next year adopted a similar statement:

There was said to be a growing disbelief and contempt for the gospel, a tendency which was being nourished by a spirit of levity, licentiousness and pride. The indifference of Christians was evident in their neglect of the Bible and the doctrines of the Church, the profanation of the Sabbath, and failure to attend public worship with regularity.⁹⁰

The proportion of the population who were members of some Church was very small—probably not more than 5 per cent in 1790; and 7 per cent, or about one in fourteen in 1800.⁹¹ Moreover, the tendency in the Virginia parishes, as noted by Schoepf, who traveled extensively in the state in 1783–84 and commented on the ruinous condition of the churches, was in the direction of decreasing interest. In New England also, as was noted by others, spiritual life was declining.

Among the chief factors contributing to moral and religious declension the following may be clearly discerned: (1) *the effect of Establishment on the spiritual vigor of the Churches*. Lack of responsibility for self-maintenance and growth during the colonial era had proved to be a spiritually debilitating influence. (2) *Intellectual revolt against the traditional orthodoxy*. As a doctrinal system the New England theology had gone to seed. Its spiritual barrenness had become generally evident.† The energies of its proponents were

* That organized religion survived the shock of war was a surprise to Wesley. In 1783 (Sept. 17) he wrote to Edward Dromgoole: "One would have imagined, that ye 'fell monster War,' would have utterly destroyed the work of God. So it has done in all Ages and Countries: So it did in Scotland a few years ago. But that his Work should increase at such a season, was never heard of before! It is plain, God has wrought a new thing in the Earth, shewing thereby, that nothing is too hard for him. . . ."—Letter, quoted in W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, pp. 13f.

† Its proponents were to continue its defense for the greater part of a century, but as a living system its force had been spent. "It so conceived the sovereignty of God and so obscured human free-

so largely given to defense that no strength remained for aggression. The Calvinistic Churches became houses divided against themselves.* The doctrines of Universalism and Unitarianism were making constant inroads within them and by the end of the century were being openly advocated in most of the prominent pulpits. The spirit of the age rebelled against the dogma of an inscrutable divine decree which arbitrarily marked some for salvation and consigned others, independently of all choice and effort of their own, to eternal torment. From without, the Deism which had so profoundly affected many leading minds of Europe found entrance to American circles and was echoed in the writings and public addresses of such Revolutionary leaders as Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, and Madison. (3) *The effect of the war on accepted moral sanctions.* Inherently war tends toward the demoralization of personal conduct and character in the population at large and this tendency was plainly evident in the case of the Revolutionary War.⁹²

For such a time as this was the Methodist Episcopal Church born. With the intense missionary zeal of its preachers, its emotional warmth, its sense of the equal station of all men in the sight of God, and its conviction of a free and universal salvation, it was destined within a few years to bring evangelical religion to a place of greatly increased power and influence in the life of the new nation.†

THOMAS COKE: MISSIONARY HERALD AND APOSTLE

Of immense significance is the fact that the man first "set apart as Superintendent" of American Methodism was one whose heart burned with a consuming missionary passion. Asbury, as we have seen, was essentially missionary in spirit and purpose, but it was Thomas Coke, rather than John Wesley or Francis Asbury, who launched early American Methodism on its foreign missionary course. He was in fact the herald and apostle‡ of both British and American Methodist missions.⁹³

Thomas Coke was born on September 9, 1747, at Brecon, a picturesque vil-

dom that it exercised, when operating in any locality undisturbed for a long period, a paralyzing effect upon human initiative. Assisted, as this effect was in New England, by the influences of a frontier situation, it proved wellnigh fatal to the churches. Theology was gradually strangling life."—Frank H. Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1907), p. 544.

* Ezra Stiles, seventh president of Yale College, contended that his successor, Timothy Dwight, had gone too far in his attack on heretical tendencies in his *Triumph of Infidelity* (1788); that he had "overshot the Mark and hurt the Cause which he meant to defend." (Ezra Stiles, *Literary Diary*, F. B. Dexter, Ed. [New York: 1901], III, 326.) At Harvard in 1805 Henry Ware who, while pastor at Hingham, Mass., had evidenced pronounced Unitarian views, was appointed Hollis professor of divinity in succession to the more orthodox David Tappan. Soon after, Samuel Webber was elected to succeed Joseph Willard as president, and "Harvard was lost to the Calvinists."—*The Completion of Independence* (John Allen Krout and Dixon Ryan Fox), pp. 168f.

† The Wesleyan influence extended far beyond the bounds of organized Methodism, affecting to some extent the total religious and civic life of the new nation. The Evangelical party of the Episcopal Church which exercised a great influence upon "the revival and expansion of . . . [that] Church, had its origin in the preaching and teaching" of the Wesleys and their successors.—Cf. William W. Manross, *A History of the American Episcopal Church*, p. 214.

‡ William Myles, in his *Chronological History of the People Called Methodists*, p. 165, calls Coke an "apostle."

lage in Wales—the only living child of a home of wealth and culture.* He studied at Oxford, receiving his Bachelor's degree on February 14, 1768; was ordained a deacon on June 10, 1770; and after examination for priest's orders, was ordained at Abergwilly in the Diocese of St. David's on August 23, 1772. While serving as a curate at South Petherton, in the parish of Somersetshire, he had his first personal contacts with the Methodists through a series of interviews with Thomas Maxfield, John Wesley's first lay itinerant,† and acquaintance with an unlettered peasant Class Leader in Devonshire whose "knowledge of divine truth" deeply impressed him. To this humble layman's grasp of "the unsearchable riches of Christ"—the nature of faith, justification, regeneration, and the means of finding peace with God and tranquillity of mind—Coke freely acknowledged that he owed greater obligation than to any other person.⁹⁴ As his religious experience deepened, the character of his ministry changed. He became more fervent. He began to preach without notes. He introduced the singing of hymns. He held group meetings for prayer, personal testimony, and evening lectures in the villages of the parish. He testified to his personal experience of the forgiveness of sins. His congregation increased until the church was crowded.‡

Under date of August 13, 1776, is found this entry in Wesley's *Journal*:

I preached at Taunton, and afterwards went with Mr. Brown to Kingston. . . . Here I found a clergyman, Dr. Coke . . . who came twenty miles on purpose [to meet me:] I had much conversation with him; and a union then began which I trust shall never end.

A year later, on August 19, 1777, occurs a second entry:

I went forward to Taunton with Dr. Coke, who, being dismissed from his curacy, has bid adieu to his honourable name, and determined to cast in his lot with us.⁹⁵

Thus, as he was completing his thirtieth year, Thomas Coke entered upon his Methodist ministry. For Wesley, his affiliation with the Methodist Move-

* The parents dedicated their son "to the service of the altar of God," and at seventeen he was entered a Gentleman Commoner at Jesus College, Oxford University; in 1770 taking the degree of M.A. His father having died, at twenty-one he succeeded him as common councilman for the borough of Brecon, and at twenty-five was elected chief magistrate. At twenty-eight he attained the degree of Doctor of Civil Laws, and from then on throughout his life—even after he became Bishop—was known and addressed as "Doctor Coke." From 1772 to 1776 he was curate at South Petherton in Somersetshire.—J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

† Later ordained by the Bishop of Londonderry, not only for the purpose of giving a man "of ardent zeal and extraordinary talent" status as a clergyman, but "as a helper of Mr. Wesley, that that good man may not work himself to death."

‡ Coke's "enthusiasm," combined with plainness of speech, created a ferment among the people and gave offense to influential members of the parish. With the connivance of some of the neighboring clergy these disaffected members presented a formal charge against him to the Bishop of the diocese. The Bishop, however, was not impressed by the complaints and explained to the dissentients that he was not disposed to invest the curate "with the honours of martyrdom." The rector of a parish was invested with the right of dismissal of a curate, and, the enemies of Coke becoming more and more insistent, the rector of South Petherton on a Sunday at the close of service, without giving notice, abruptly dismissed his curate in the presence of the congregation. Having been given no opportunity of delivering his soul in a farewell address to the people to whom he had preached for almost three years, following the formal service for two ensuing Sundays Coke took his stand outside, near the church door, and preached to the people in true Methodistic form.—See Samuel Drew, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D.*, . . . pp. 14ff.

ment came at an opportune time.⁹⁶ Of just such an energetic, capable, thoroughly trained coadjutor Wesley stood in great need. Methodism had extended far and wide. Its founder, now seventy-two, was beginning to feel the inevitable limitations imposed by age. Until now he had borne all but alone the rapidly increasing burden of administrative responsibility. In Thomas Coke he found his "right hand"—an assistant as indefatigable in labor and travel as himself—and the load that had become too heavy for him he soon after began to share. In 1778 Coke's name appears for the first time in the *Minutes*, along with Wesley's and several others, stationed at London. His congregations on the Circuit at the old "Foundry," at the chapel in West Street, and elsewhere were so large that frequently the preaching houses could not accommodate all who came. But his Circuit preaching constituted only a small part of his activities. By appointment of Wesley he filled numerous engagements in distant places. Beginning about 1780, on alternate years he visited the Methodist Societies in Ireland and in 1782 convened the Irish preachers in the first Irish Conference, held in Dublin.⁹⁷ Coke was made president and continued with some intermissions to hold the office until his death.* In 1784 he represented Wesley in the drawing up and enrollment in Chancery of the legal instrument, the "Deed of Declaration" which defined the title of "the Conference of the People called Methodists."

That the missionary impulse was stirring in Coke's soul even before he affiliated with the Methodists is suggested by his questioning, in the Kingston interview with Wesley, whether he ought to confine his ministry to one congregation. As if discerning his inner thought, "in a manner peculiarly his own" Wesley clasped his hands and said: "Brother, go out, go out and preach the gospel to all the world."⁹⁸ Coke's early purpose took concrete form in January, 1784, in the drawing up of a "Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens,"† consisting of ten numbered paragraphs and a list of persons subscribing in advance.⁹⁹ That Coke was the prime mover in forming the Society is indicated by the fact that his name heads the list of "Subscribers," followed by a subscription of £2 s2. There are twenty-four other subscriptions—one that of Fletcher of Madelay. John Wesley's name does not appear.

The missionary passion with which Coke was imbued as he set forth on his mission to America is evidenced by passages recorded in his *Journal* during the voyage:

* In 1805 the Irish preachers wrote a letter to the English Conference formally requesting his re-appointment for the following year, saying: "Our love and respect for him increase every year, so that we were ready to look upon ourselves as orphans when contrary winds delayed his coming so long."—J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

† It is of interest to note that this first-published missionary appeal made by Coke antedated by more than two years that of William Carey which so greatly stirred the Baptists and other religious groups.

Friday 24 [September, 1784]. . . . I . . . employ myself in reading the Life of *Francis Xavier*. O for a soul like his! But, glory be to God, there is nothing impossible with him. I seem to want the wings of an eagle, and the voice of a trumpet, that I may proclaim the gospel through the East and the West, and the North and the South. . . . Tuesday 28.— . . . For these few days past I have been reading the life of *David Brainerd*. O that I may follow him as he followed Christ. His humility, his self-denial, his perseverance, and his flaming zeal for God, were exemplary indeed. . . . Monday 4.—[October] I have finished the life of *David Brainerd*.¹⁰⁰

The notes in his *Journal* describing his itinerary preceding the Christmas Conference read like a modern version of one of the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Note the striking resemblances in this abstract:

In this town, which has been remarkable above any other on the Continent for persecution, there arose a great dispute whether I should preach in the church or not . . . the church door was locked [against me] though they have had no service in it, I think, for several years. . . . However, I read prayers and preached at the door of a cottage, to one of the largest congregations I have had in America. . . . I preached at noon at a place called *Bolingbroke*. Our chapel is . . . in a forest. Perhaps I have in this little tour baptized more children and adults than I should in my whole life, if stationed in an English parish. . . . I preached to a lively congregation at Tuckaho-Chapel. . . . In my way, . . . dined with . . . [the representative in the Assembly], a dear brother, . . . who has lately built us a Synagogue . . . during the war, when he was sheriff for Caroline-county . . . one of our Preachers was apprehended . . . because he would not take the oaths of allegiance. . . . [He] was obliged to imprison him, but . . . he . . . [turned] his own house into his prison; and both the colonel and his lady were awakened by their prisoner. . . . At noon I preached, baptized and administered the sacrament in Kent-chapel; and at three preached in Worton-chapel, to a large congregation.¹⁰¹

His mind was weighted with various concerns during his itinerary following the Christmas Conference but over and above all else Coke sought the promotion of missions in America. His trip to Philadelphia and New York was for the purpose of raising funds for the transportation of Garrettson and Cromwell to Nova Scotia.* His predominant interest is thus interpreted by Jonathan Crowther, one of his biographers:

in the then existing circumstances, the whole of Methodism in that country might have been called a mission. However . . . the Doctor meant . . . in a religious sense, the exploring of new regions, the breaking up fresh ground, the carrying the gospel into parts where the Methodists had no societies, and parts not included within the limits of any existing circuit.¹⁰²

Coke's career in America, largely because of circumstances beyond his control, was fated to be checkered and somewhat unhappy. It was his unenviable lot to be sent to the new Republic at a time when envoys from Great Britain—

* Coke records in his *Journal*: "Our friends in *Philadelphia* and *New York* gave me sixty pounds currency for the Missionaries. . . ."—*Extracts of the Journals* . . . , p. 53.

no matter what their mission—were subject to more or less distrust, if not overt antagonism. Although peace had been formally declared (April 19, 1783), Great Britain still retained many of her western and northern military posts, including Niagara, Oswego, and Detroit. She also refused to pay for Negro slaves carried off at the war's end. Undoubtedly, for his part, Coke felt a strong bond of attachment to England. Under these circumstances it was inevitable that for years he should be the victim of anti-British feeling, and that his every proposal should be viewed from the angle of possessing a possible British bias.*

Coke's experiences in America—his fellowship with the preachers, the wide extent of the Methodist work and the success attending it, and possibly more than anything else the devotion and unbounded zeal of Asbury—had kindled his previously existing missionary ardor into a flaming zeal that burned unceasingly through the years.† Following his return to England he traveled over a considerable part of the country seeking to increase interest in the missionary cause. He published in behalf of missions an *Address to the Pious and Benevolent*,¹⁰³ the first Methodist missionary tract. He persuaded Wesley to set apart three preachers—William Hammet, William Warrener, and John Clarke—to reenforce the work begun in Nova Scotia. His attention having been directed to the Channel Islands as possibly affording a key to missionary operations in France he visited them and succeeded in establishing a Methodist Society in Guernsey.¹⁰⁴

As early as September 24, 1786, he was again at sea headed for Nova Scotia on the stormy voyage that directed him much against his will to the island of Antigua in the West Indies, where he landed on December 25. Between Christmas Day and February 10, 1787, he visited not only Antigua but also Dominica, St. Vincent, St. Christopher, and St. Eustatius, preaching to the British residents and to the Negroes, forming Classes and laying missionary foundations. On the first of March he landed at Charleston, and soon thereafter began an extensive itinerary in company with Asbury which took him through South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, "visiting and confirming the churches." On this trip Coke took a special interest in ministry to Negroes. He records in his *Journal*:

Since my visit to the islands [the West Indies], I have found a peculiar gift of

* Some of Asbury's actions in his relations with Coke can scarcely be understood on any other basis than this. Asbury apparently felt that Coke could not, or would not, free himself from the British Connexion and that his administration of the American Conferences would tend toward reuniting them with British Methodism. He gave expression to this fear in his *Journal*, even as late as 1797: "I am sensibly assured the Americans ought to act as if they expected to lose me every day, and had no dependence upon Doctor Coke; taking prudent care not to place themselves at all under the controlling influence of British Methodists."—(II, 350.)

† Stevens says, "He seems to have received in America the anointing of that missionary spirit which originated, at last, through his agency, the whole Wesleyan missionary system." (*Op. cit.*, II, 260.) Findlay and Holdsworth say "... his first voyage to America greatly stimulated Coke's ardour and enlarged his views. . . ."—*The History of Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 254.

speaking to the blacks. It seems to be almost irresistible. Who knows but the Lord is preparing me for a visit in some future time to the coast of *Africa*?¹⁰⁵

However, in the course of this itinerary, Coke was less outspoken concerning the evil of slavery as an institution than on his preceding visit to America. He had decided, according to Etheridge, his biographer:

that moderation at that particular time would do more good than exuberant zeal. He thought that, as the Gospel took hold of the people, it would create those liberal ideas and feelings which would eventually produce the desired effect. 'I am now informed that soon after I left this country [Halifax], on my former tour, a bill was presented against me as a seditious person before the grand jury, and was found by the jury. . . . Many of the people, I find, imagined that I would not venture among them again. . . . Indeed, I now acknowledge that, however just my sentiments may be concerning slavery, it was ill-judged of me to deliver them from the pulpit. . . .'

With one exception Wesley's early American missionaries did not stay put. All except Asbury were short-term missionaries.* When in February, 1784, in his study at City Road, Wesley first made known to Coke his desire that he accept ordination at his (Wesley's) hands and "proceed in that character to the continent of America to superintend the Societies in the United States," was it his intention that Coke should give himself exclusively to his duties as Superintendent of the American Societies, remaining permanently in the United States? The question cannot be answered with certainty, but it is an interesting query on which to speculate.

The preachers took seriously Wesley's assignment of Coke as Superintendent, and their own action at the Christmas Conference in confirmation, and apparently expected him to give himself without reservation to the duties of that office. The first edition of the *Discipline*, and the *Minutes of the Annual Conferences* for 1785 and 1786, in answer to Question I, "Who are the superintendents of our Church?" record: "Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury." But whatever Wesley's original intention may have been, the British Conference was not willing entirely to relinquish him and he himself had no other thought than to serve both the Methodist Episcopal Church as Bishop in America, and the British Conference in the same capacities as before his ordination. The situation presented was anomalous and complications developed, both soon and late.

The itinerary ended at Baltimore, where on April 2, 1787, Conference convened. Open dissatisfaction was expressed by many of the preachers.¹⁰⁷ The year before it had been agreed that the Conference would be held at Abingdon,

* This is not to say that, had it not been for the War of Independence and the consequent necessity for British sympathisers to leave, some of the early missionaries other than Asbury and James Dempster might have remained permanently in the country.

Maryland, on July 24, 1787, and it was so entered in the *Minutes*.¹⁰⁸ After Coke's arrival at Charleston on March 1, notice was circulated that the date and place of meeting would be April 2, at Baltimore—notification too late for some of the preachers to reach the place of meeting on time, and seriously inconveniencing others. It was charged that Coke had arbitrarily changed the date without consultation, while out of the country, and in doing so had transcended his authority. Coke's defense was that change from the July date had been ordered by Wesley in a letter addressed to him on September 6, 1786.* While this shifted the main responsibility it did not wholly clear the atmosphere and the Conference entered the following question and answer on the *Minutes*:

Quest. I. *Who are the Superintendents of our Church for the United States?*

Ans. Thomas Coke (when present in the States) and Francis Asbury.†

Coke's difficulties with the preachers were not confined to the United States. When he arrived in Liverpool, returning from his third trip to the United States, about two years later (July 10, 1789), he found himself in trouble with the British Conference. While in New York he had joined with Asbury in signing a formal address of felicitation "To the President of the United States" which began:

We, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, humbly beg leave, in the name of our Society collectively . . . to express to you the warm feelings of our hearts, and our sincere congratulations on your appointment to the presidentship of these States. . . .¹⁰⁹

The letter was brief and was about as innocuous as such a document could possibly be, except for incidental reference to the War of Independence as "the glorious Revolution," but when word reached England that Coke, a British subject had signed it, the fat was in the fire. When the Conference convened in Bristol and the question "Whether there are any objections to any of our preachers?" the name of Thomas Coke was called, the address was read, and the preachers passed a unanimous vote of censure. But "having delivered themselves of what was felt to be a duty on the unpleasant occasion" the Conference listened with interest and respect to his missionary report and permitted him to proceed "on his usual home-work of preaching from town to town, and begging for the means of sending forth the Gospel abroad."¹¹⁰

* Wesley's letter read as follows: "Dear Sir,—I desire that you would appoint a General Conference of all our Preachers in the United States, to meet at Baltimore on May the 1st., 1787. And that Mr. Richard Whatcoat may be appointed Superintendent with Mr. Francis Asbury."—*Letters*, VII, 339.

† Disposed to go the second mile, Coke drew up a definite pledge, asking that it be recorded: "I do solemnly engage by this instrument, that I never will, by virtue of my office as superintendent of the Methodist Church, during my absence from the United States of America, exercise any government whatever in said Methodist Church. And I do also engage that I will exercise no privilege in the said Church when present, except that of ordaining according to the regulations and laws already existing or hereafter to be made in said Church, and that of presiding when present in Conference, and, lastly, that of travelling at large."—J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 172f.

After the close of the April, 1787, Conference* the two Bishops visited Cokesbury College, nearing completion, and met with the Societies in New York and Philadelphia. Then on May 27 Coke embarked on a merchant-ship for Dublin, accomplishing the voyage in twenty-nine days. Sixteen busy months were spent in the British Isles. He first attended the annual assembly of the Irish preachers, then in company with Wesley again visited the islands of Guernsey and Jersey. Returning to England, he entered upon a systematic, intensive financial campaign for the extension of British Methodist missions in the course of which by the persistence of his solicitation he so tried the patience of preachers less interested in the missionary cause that some went to Wesley with complaint. Even Wesley did not fully support his efforts.† But none of these things moved Thomas Coke. He had become possessed with a consuming passion for the winning of the world for Christ and he refused to be restrained. He devoted his own fortune to the cause, gave to it the large bequests left to him in turn by his two wives, and to the end of his days continued his personal solicitation of others.

In the latter part of October, 1788, Coke once more set sail, embarking on his third trip to the United States—again via the West Indies, taking with him three missionaries—finally landing at Charleston on February 24, 1789. As before, he joined Asbury, the two proceeding on a long and strenuous itinerary through the southern and eastern states, holding ten Annual Conferences within three months,‡ an amazing record. One test of a man's devotion to a cause is his capacity of physical exertion and endurance in its behalf without complaint. Coke's narrative is full of interest for its many sidelights on religious conditions and customs, and its self-revealing comments. There is never a word of complaint on the hardships of the journey and little detail on any of its physical aspects.¹¹¹ Asbury's account makes it possible to fill in details on what the trip involved.¹¹² The itinerary ended at the Conference held in New York, beginning May 28. On June 5 Asbury records, "Doctor Coke left us and went on board the Union for Liverpool."

Again, for sixteen months in England, Coke busied himself incessantly in

* Was this a "General Conference"? Wesley so intended; Coke by correspondence invited the preachers to attend a General Conference; and the Conference considered the election of Superintendents and rejected Wesley's two nominees. Nevertheless neither Jesse Lee nor Abel Stevens regarded it as a General Conference, and Coke in a letter written in 1808 said: "We had at that time (1791) no regular General Conference. Only one had been held in the year 1784." J. J. Tigert (*A Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism*, pp. 237 ff.) is indecisive.

† Coke called upon merchants, bankers, and professional men in their stores, counting houses, and offices. Over a large part of England "he literally begged from door to door." He appealed from the pulpits where he preached for more generous collections. All of which he continued as his regular course of action for years. To Thomas Taylor, stationed at Hull, Wesley wrote in 1790: "Dear Tommy: I did not approve of Dr. Coke's making collections either in your's or any other circuit. I told him so, and I am not well pleased with his doing it. It was very ill done."—W. T. A. Barber, in *A New History of Methodism*, Eds., W. G. Townsend, H. B. Workman, George Eayrs, II, 292; John Wesley, *Letters*, VIII, 211.

‡ Georgia, March 9; Charleston, S. C., March 17; North Carolina "at the house of a planter in the country on the borders of a fine river called the Yeadkin," April 12; Petersburg, Va., April 18; Leesburg, Va., April 28; Baltimore, May 4; Chestertown, Md., May 14; Philadelphia, May 18; New Jersey, Trenton, May 23; New York, May 28.

preaching and in various other activities assisting Wesley. Most important was the formation of the Methodist Missionary Committee—the first corporate body set up in England for the administration of missionary affairs.*

On October 16, 1790, Coke sailed from Falmouth bound for the fourth time for the United States—again by the way of the West Indies, this time with two new missionaries. En route from Jamaica to Charleston in February, the brig on which he was a passenger was wrecked off Edisto Island, about fifty miles from Charleston, and it was not until February 23 (1791) that he arrived at his destination—on the closing day of the South Carolina Conference session. But one day was sufficient for Coke to secure “an able missionary for the people of Edisto Island.”† Concerning this appointment he wrote:

If I can but be the means of sending the gospel . . . [among them], it will be a glorious compensation, and the only one I can make, for their many kindnesses to me, when I was a stranger and pilgrim among them.¹¹³

Thirteen Conferences had been scheduled to be held between February 22 and August 23, and since Asbury had presided at all Conferences of the preceding year (1790) it was now Coke's turn “to take this vast visitation.”¹¹⁴ The two Bishops started on their long itinerary, following the same kind of hurried, crowded, wearying schedule as two years before. Asbury records:

Friday [March] 4. . . . Our horses are much hurt by long rides, having travelled one hundred miles in two days. . . . *Thursday*, 10 . . . My body was wearied with labour and want of sleep.¹¹⁵

Beginning March 16 the Georgia Conference was held; then the North Carolina, opening on April 2. Crowther says of Coke that by the middle of April “he had rode about eight hundred miles since he landed at Charleston.”¹¹⁶ On April 20 the Virginia Conference convened at Petersburg, closing on the twenty-second. The itinerants hastened on, preaching daily, reaching Port Royal, Virginia, on the evening of April 28. Here, after Coke had preached, a merchant of the town invited him to supper and informed him that John Wesley had died “in his own house in London” on March 2. “Brother Coke was sunk in spirit,” Asbury wrote in his *Journal*,¹¹⁷ “and wished to hasten home immediately.” The next morning he set off, “riding day and night to be in time for the packet at New York.” Asbury adds, “leaving me to fill the appointments.” At Alexandria Coke received a letter confirming the news. He was much cast down:

We were . . . come into a country abounding with singing birds; but, alas! I could take but little pleasure in them. I felt, indeed, much communion with God; but the

* This committee lapsed after 1791 and Coke again became the sole executive connecting English Methodism with its missionaries abroad.—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 63f.

† In the *General Minutes*, 1791, the entry appears: “Edisto Island, Beverly Allen,” with no indication of its being a missionary appointment. (I, 41.) No appointment for Edisto Island is listed in the 1792 *Minutes*.

death of my venerable friend had cast such a shade of melancholy over my mind, that I could find little pleasure in the contemplation of nature.¹¹⁸

Impatient at delay but greatly hindered by a combination of circumstances,* on May 14 he finally embarked at Newcastle, Delaware, on the William Penn for London.†

The British Conference met, under the burden of greatly increased responsibility, at Manchester on July 26. Caution—not to say fear—lest the autocratic power exercised for many years by Wesley might be perpetuated led the Conference in choosing a president to pass by both Alexander Mather who in 1789 had been ordained as Superintendent for England; and Coke, the Superintendent for America. Instead, William Thompson, the leader in the formulation of the plan of District organizations, was made President and Coke was chosen as Secretary—an office which he repeatedly filled for years.

Despite the multitude of his new duties his thought and attention were in no measure distracted from his primary concern. The revolution was on in France. Roman Catholicism had been disestablished and all churches declared national property. To Coke the time at last seemed opportune for the establishment of a Protestant mission in Paris. Enlisting as a helper John de Queteville, of the Island of Jersey, whom he ordained, with no little difficulty he succeeded in reaching the city. But all attempts to gain a hearing for the Gospel were in vain. They met not only religious indifference but threats; people warning them that "if they did not take their departure in peace, they would hang them to the lamp-posts."¹¹⁹ Returning to England, Coke gave several months to a preaching tour of the Circuits, soliciting missionary funds.

* On reaching Baltimore on Sunday, May 1, Coke found that the packet was not to sail from New York until the following Thursday. Accordingly he tarried, and Conference having convened, preached a Conference memorial sermon, taking as his text 2 Kings 2:12: "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Asbury had overtaken Coke, and was present. His only comment on the sermon is: "[Dr. Coke] preached on the occasion of Mr. Wesley's death; and mentioned some things which gave offence." (*Journal*, II, 115f.) Very early on Monday morning Coke departed from Baltimore in the mail coach but unfortunately was taken with a severe attack of sciatica. At Wilmington a physician who had been called to attend him laid an interdiction on him so that he was not able to reach New York in time. He then "turned his face to Philadelphia," waiting there nine days for a ship, preaching almost every evening, some days in the morning as well, and "three times on the Lord's day."—S. Drew, *op. cit.*, 231f.; T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 178ff.

† If Coke had cherished ambitions or hopes of being designated as Wesley's successor, "as was commonly supposed," they were effectively dissipated by an action taken in the interim between Wesley's death and his arrival: "the plan of districts," as it was called, expressly designed to prevent any person or persons, except the Legal Conference of One Hundred, from "standing in Mr. Wesley's shoes." Coke had been named by Wesley in a testamentary deed as the first in order of seven trustees to whom he bequeathed all "his books, tracts, pamphlets," copyrights, and stock in trade to the intent that they should apply all the profits "unto the sole use and benefit of the Conference of the people called Methodists." In his will he had also said, "I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead [his physician], and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see fit." Dr. Whitehead saw a chance for large private profit from royalties on a life of Wesley, and much unseemly contention ensued. The testamentary trustees appointed Thomas Coke and Henry Moore to compile a life of Wesley, a commission which they executed promptly but under the great disadvantage of not having access to Wesley's manuscripts—Whitehead having taken possession of them and stubbornly refusing to permit Coke and Moore to make use of them. Of their biography, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M.* (London: 1792), ten thousand copies were sold within a few weeks of publication. Sales "cleared £1700. in two months." Later Whitehead's book, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A. . . . with the Life of Charles Wesley*, came from the press. Neither volume proved to be a really satisfactory biography.—Cf. Jonathan Crowther, *Life of Dr. Coke*, pp. 297ff.; also J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 218ff.

He attended the 1792 British Conference, held in London, and on September 1 embarked at Gravesend on his fifth voyage to America.

On October 30, 1792, he landed at Newcastle, Delaware.* Traveling the seventy miles by day and most of the night, "in a one-horse chaise," he arrived at Baltimore in time for the opening of the General Conference on November 1. Asbury abstained from attendance on the sessions, giving entirely over to Coke the matter of presiding over the Conference.†

Following adjournment of General Conference, Coke visited Cokesbury College, spent eight days in Philadelphia editing the revised *Discipline*, and twelve days in New York, preparing and publishing "a discourse on 'The Witness of the Spirit to the Believer's Adoption.'" On the twelfth of December he sailed from New York for the West Indies, arriving at St. Eustatius on the last day of 1792. In the islands—particularly St. Eustatius, St. Christopher, and St. Vincent—persecution of the Protestant missionaries which had begun some time before had become so severe that Coke was deeply disturbed and resolved to do everything within his power for the establishment of religious liberty. With this resolve uppermost in his mind he sailed from Jamaica on April 14, 1793, reaching Falmouth on June 6. He immediately presented a memorial to the King in Council, appealing personally at about the same time to several officers of government in behalf of religious liberty in St. Vincent Island, which was under British rule. In August word was given that the oppressive act of the assembly of St. Vincent had been disannulled by the King. Encouraged by his success Coke proceeded to Holland for the purpose of appeal to the government of the Netherlands in behalf of religious freedom in the Dutch colony of St. Eustatius. For the time being his efforts seemed wholly unavailing but in 1804 the policy was changed and the door to Methodist missionary work in the island was opened.

For years Coke had been dreaming of a mission to Africa. At this time there came to him from the Fula tribes, located in the British colony of Sierra Leone, West Africa, an appeal for teachers. In 1795 he succeeded in enlisting a party of mechanics and Local Preachers for settlement in the Foulah country to instruct the native people "in domestic arts, inculcate piety by their example, and occasionally preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ." The party embarked at Portsmouth in February, 1796. Unhappily, insufficient care had been exercised

* On this voyage Coke was deep in preliminary plans for the writing of the *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* which the 1792 British Conference formally asked him to write—a work that might be "neither . . . so tedious as the expositions of Gill and Henry, nor so laconic as the annotations with which Mr. Wesley had favoured the world." (S. Drew, *op. cit.*, pp. 245f.) The task then undertaken took him nearly fifteen years to complete.

† Coke was much impressed by the spirit of the Conference which continued for fifteen days, and by the high quality of the discussions. "I had always entertained," he says, "very high ideas of the piety and zeal of the American Preachers, and of the considerable abilities of many; but I had no expectation. I confess, that the debates would be carried on in so very masterly a manner; so that on every question of importance, the subject seemed to be considered in every possible light."—*Op. cit.*, p. 186.

in the selection of the personnel. While en route dissension arose among the members of the group, becoming more and more serious until soon after arrival in Sierra Leone it became necessary for the entire project to be abandoned before any members of the colony had arrived in the Foulah area.¹²⁰ The complete failure of the mission* was a sore disappointment to Coke, so great as to leave him—to use his own expression—“bleeding at every pore.”¹²¹

On August 6, 1796, Coke embarked at Gravesend on his sixth voyage to America, the most disagreeable trip he had ever had, due to bad accommodations, scanty fare and, especially the blasphemy, obscenity, and base behavior of the two captains.¹²² He was accompanied by Pierre de Pontavice, a French nobleman of Brittany, a convert from Roman Catholicism who had become “a useful preacher.”

The bishop brought him out for his Christian companionship and to acquire, from his conversation a better use of the French language, for he hoped yet to proclaim the gospel among the French.¹²³

Coke reached Baltimore two days before the General Conference convened on October 20. Asbury wrote in his *Journal* under date of November 19:

. . . what we have done is printed. Bishop Coke was cordially received, as my friend and colleague, to be wholly for America, unless a way should be opened to France.¹²⁴

The fact seems to be that the Foulah episode had led to considerable criticism in England. Drew states that Coke's experience at the last preceding British Conference had been “far from being pleasing.” He had left England cast down in spirit and with questionings in his mind whether he could not be “more extensively useful in America” and should not “take up his final abode” on the American continent.¹²⁵ During the Conference session the wide extension of the work, the precarious health of Asbury, and Coke's long absences from the country led to discussion concerning the advisability of election of “an assistant bishop.” Whereupon, says Nathan Bangs, “Dr. Coke put an end to the discussion by offering himself unreservedly to the American Methodists.” The offer seems to have been accepted with eagerness by the Conference. In terms characteristic of his spirit Coke presented a certificate in writing:

* In his account of the project Samuel Drew speaks of one member of the group who alone “was actuated by a proper principle” and maintained “his integrity.” Although neither Etheridge, nor Drew, who gives a lengthy account of the enterprise, mentions any member of the party by name it seems wholly probable that the one person commended was Robert Yellalee who later became an highly esteemed minister in New England. Abel Stevens says that in 1796 “Robert Yellalee was ordained elder by Bishop Coke for the Foulah Mission, Africa”; that he embarked with others for Sierra Leone; that due to the outbreak of war and “other circumstances” it was necessary “for the missionaries to leave.” Furthermore, that Yellalee “sailed for America, joined the Methodist itinerants of New England in 1796, and was appointed to Provincetown, Mass. . . . In 1799, his domestic circumstances compelled him to locate. He resided till his death (July 12, 1846) in Maine, usefully employed as a Local Preacher. He founded the church at Saco.”—*Memorials of Methodism*, First Series, *Memorials of the Introduction of Methodism into the Eastern States* (Boston: Charles H. Pierce, 1848), pp. 362f.

I offer myself to my American brethren entirely to their service, all I am and have, with my talents and labors in every respect, without any mental reservation whatever, to labor among them and to assist Bishop Asbury; not to station the preachers at any time when he is present; but to exercise all the episcopal duties, when I hold a conference in his absence, and by his consent, and to visit the West Indies and France, when there is an opening and I can be spared.

(Signed) Thomas Coke.

Conference Room, Baltimore, Oct. 27, 1796.¹²⁶

At long last it appeared that the Church was to have in Coke—what it had needed for years—a full-time Bishop in addition to Asbury. It was not so to be. Three months later (February 6, 1797) Coke sailed from Charleston for Glasgow.*

In the interval, by agreement, Coke and Asbury journeyed together first to the Baltimore, then to the Virginia Conference. Thence by separate routes they made their way to Charleston for a third Annual Conference—Asbury taking “the sea-side and . . . [Coke] the upper country” route. During this time Coke learned by painful experience what it would mean to serve as “a Coadjutor in the Episcopacy” with Francis Asbury. As to the material facts their *Journals* agree. Asbury was so ill that he resolved to give up traveling for the winter. He says:

I sent my papers to brother J[esse] Lee, who proceeds to Charleston; also my plan and directions how to station the preachers, to brother [Jonathan] Jackson.

He does not so much as mention the name of his associate. On his part, Coke writes with remarkable restraint, declaring that “everything was settled with the utmost harmony and concord.” But nine years later he unburdened his soul, saying that he had offered to hold the Conference but to his astonishment his offer “was refused.” He was not consulted, he says, “in the least degree whatever concerning the station of a single preacher.”¹²⁷

In Britain, when it was noised abroad among the preachers that this interval was likely to be Coke’s last period of service with them, there were many protests:

They saw in him the spirit of missionary enterprise combined with a perfect knowledge of the details of the work, together with a quenchless zeal which was altogether marvellous. They clearly perceived that the Methodism of England needed such a man, and sought to reclaim him.

In response to the representations of the British preachers Asbury wrote, by advice of the Virginia Conference, emphasizing the extent of the Methodist

* Before General Conference adjourned Coke received the *Minutes* of the British Conference held in his absence. From the *Minutes* he learned that he had been appointed to convene the Irish Conference. He says: “I had promised the Irish Conference . . . that if I was so appointed, I would be with them, God willing. . . . This I laid before the General Conference, and they unanimously judged that I ought to fulfill my engagement with the Irish Brethren. . . .”—Letter to the New York Conference, Jan. 6, 1806. (See note, p. 118.)

Movement in America, his own physical disabilities—"we have only one worn-out superintendent"—and indirectly suggesting the need for Coke's aid in administration:

I have now with me an assistant who does every thing for me he constitutionally can: but the ordaining and stationing the preachers can only be performed by myself in the doctor's absence.

Coke's Journals covering the period June, 1797–August, 1813, were lost. Few details are recorded of his many activities following his return to Britain, where he was incessantly busy until departure on his eighth voyage to America. He arrived in Baltimore shortly before the opening of the General Conference of 1800, feeling some trepidation lest the Conference take action binding him to remain in America, but at the same time rendering him "comparatively useless." After two days' debate a resolution was adopted:

That in compliance with the address of the British Conference, to let Dr. Coke return to Europe, this General Conference consent to his return, upon condition that he come back to America as soon as his business will allow, but certainly by the next General Conference.

In addition the Conference addressed a letter to the British brethren expressing "ardent desire for his [Coke's] continuance in America" and stating that he was only being "lent . . . for a season to return to us as soon as he conveniently can."¹²⁸

Immediately following adjournment Coke sailed for England. Impressed later by the earnestness of General Conference action, "by Bishop Asbury's letters, as well as from letters written by several of the Preachers" that he would at last be employed "in some manner as a Bishop," in the autumn of 1803 he embarked on what was to be his final voyage to the United States. Following an arduous preaching journey of some three thousand miles, he reached Baltimore in time for the opening session of General Conference on May 7, 1804. As "senior Bishop" he presided over the Conference. This time Coke came with full intention of remaining in the United States, but again the Wesleyan Methodist Conference earnestly solicited his return, and the Conference voted assent, "provided he shall hold himself subject to the call of three of our annual Conferences to return when he is requested" but in any event "to the next General Conference."*

The fact seems to be that Asbury was unwilling to consent to Coke's exercising in any degree the power that rightfully belonged to him as a Bishop. He

* This action could not have been, under the circumstances, especially disappointing to Coke since he had again suffered rebuff at the hands of Asbury. Presenting himself at the Georgia Conference in Augusta on Jan. 4 he "was amazed to find that everything was in the same situation" as in 1797: he was not consulted "on the station of a single preacher"; he was even refused a copy of the stationing plan. He then saw, he wrote later, "the will of God . . . that [he] ought not to labour in America, unless the General Conference would consent to comply in some degree with its engagements . . . every Bishop ought to have a right of giving his judgment on every point, or he is but the shadow of a Bishop."—Letter to the New York Conference, Jan. 6, 1806.

knew that Coke did not possess the intimate acquaintance with the preachers that he himself had gained through long years of close association and he was unwilling to entrust him with the right of making or even influencing appointments while he was gaining knowledge and experience. He feared also that Coke, with his deep and abiding attachment to the British Connection might in some way entangle the American Church in a British alliance or otherwise limit its freedom. The General Conference, or at least many of the members, earnestly desired that the Church should enjoy the benefit of the great service Coke was capable of rendering but they would not act decisively against the judgment of the one to whom the entire Church owed more, under God, than to any other living man. The inevitable outcome was that Coke never again returned to America, though once and again, after the rebuff of 1804, he offered himself wholeheartedly, providing the Church would acknowledge his rightful authority and prerogatives as a Bishop.*

During all the years that Bishop Coke was attempting to come to an understanding and working relationship with the Methodist Episcopal Church his missionary zeal was finding ever new ways of expression. At the Virginia Conference, January 5, 1797, a pressing call had come for missionaries to be sent to the Bahama Islands but the number of available preachers was so far inadequate to the needs of Virginia and the Carolinas that the Conference declined to respond to the call.

In England, Coke turned his attention to recruiting missionaries for the evangelization of Roman Catholic peasants in Ireland and in 1799 several were employed.† The next year two missionaries were enlisted for itinerant preaching in Wales in the Welsh language. In the tenth year sixty Societies had been organized with more than five thousand members.¹²⁹ In 1805 Coke formulated a plan for home mission work in England to reach communities "not included in any regular circuit." Three years later he could report that thirty-five missionaries "were appointed by our last Conference for this home department."¹³⁰ During 1809-10 Methodist preaching had been begun among the 70,000 French prisoners of war interned in England, some thousands of them on crowded prison ships. The British Conference of 1811 had under

* Three times Coke sent extended letters to America endeavoring to make his position clear, and tendering his services: (1) A printed "circular letter," dated June 1, 1805, a copy of which was sent to every member of the New York Conference, proposing the separation of the Church into two diocesan divisions over one of which he would be given exclusive episcopal jurisdiction. (An original copy of this letter is in possession of the Methodist Historical Society of New York.) (2) A second letter addressed to the New York Conference, dated January 6, 1806. (The original copy of this letter is in the Library of Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J. See also reprint, W. L. Duren, *Francis Asbury* . . . pp. 256ff.) (3) A letter dated Nov. 16, 1807, addressed to the General Conference, acknowledging that his "circular letter" was "out of order," and restating his position and the conditions on which he was willing to come to America "for life."—Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 196ff.

† The annual report of Methodist missions for 1805 says: "Our missions in Ireland, in the ancient Irish language are still very successful. The last Irish Conference . . . doubled the number of missionaries, raising them from four to eight." By 1811 the number had been increased to twelve.—J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, pp. 461.

consideration a proposal for sending missionaries among them but some members pleaded "inability [of the Conference] to support the missionaries." Coke, "in order to silence all objections" agreed "to become responsible for the whole amount."¹³¹ Missionary work was inaugurated and continued to the close of the war. In 1811, his thought turned again to Africa and four missionaries were sent to Sierra Leone, Coke once more overcoming the objection of lack of funds by proposing to take upon himself "the principal part of the first expense."^{*}

For twenty years the support of British Methodist missions had rested almost entirely on the personal exertions of one man. His personal contributions were very large. The account of receipts and disbursements, for example, for 1793 showed there was due him for funds advanced nearly eleven thousand dollars. He gave the entire amount to the cause. By 1804 he had exhausted his private resources, and the finances of the missions had become embarrassed.[†] This, together with a growing conviction that the total administration of missions should not be left in the hands of one man, led the Conference of 1804 to organize a standing committee on missions. In 1813 the Wesleyan Missionary Society was organized.

In the meantime a hope long-deferred revived and was in the way of being realized. In the *Arminian Magazine* for 1792 is a letter dated 1785 from an Indian gentleman in answer to inquiries made by Coke concerning the practicability of a mission to India.¹³² The letter gives elaborate counsel on the best way of proceeding. Busy with plans for Nova Scotia and the West Indies Coke replied:

The difficulties in the way of a mission to Bengal are very great but nothing is impossible with God. But at present our openings in America, and the pressing invitations we have lately received from Nova-Scotia, the West Indies, and the United States, call for all the help we can possibly afford our brethren in that quarter of the world. As soon as the present extraordinary calls from America are answered, I trust we shall be able to turn our thoughts to Bengal.¹³³

During all the intervening years the thought of India was never absent from Coke's mind. In his sixtieth year he set his heart on the establishment of the India mission and on going to India himself for the purpose. In 1812 he made

^{*} Coke's zeal for the cause was so great that it absorbed his whole soul. It was said of him that when, overcome by fatigue, he fell into a doze, if missions were mentioned he became instantly wide-awake and entered into animated conversation. This once led an observer to declare, "That if the Doctor was dead, and some person was to pronounce the words mission or missionary in his ear, there might be some hope of his return to life."—J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

[†] In April, 1805, in his fifty-eighth year, Coke married Penelope Goulding Smith. He first met her at Clifton Hot-Wells, while on one of his rounds soliciting missionary contributions. She readily subscribed one hundred guineas, and when a few days later he called on her for the payment she had decided "to augment her benefaction by making it two hundred guineas." Her generosity, piety, and genial spirit won the bachelor's heart and within a short time they were married. She "brought with her a fortune of more than twenty thousand pounds," and "even this" the Bishop declared, "fell short of her ardent desire to do good." Her health was not of the best and, after a short illness, she died on January 25, 1811. About eleven months later, in December, 1811, Coke was united in marriage to Ann Loxdale who, also, was possessed of ample means. She died on Dec. 5, 1812.

formal proposal to the British Conference. As usual he met opposition from cautious brethren. He then used the tactics that so often had proven successful: he would give £6000. of his own to establish the mission. But his own outgoing must be approved. His friends used every argument to dissuade him. But he was adamant. They added remonstrance to argument. "He burst into tears" and finally said, "If you will not let me go to India, you will break my heart."¹³⁴ The British *Minutes* for 1813, in answer to the question: "What is the judgment of the Conference concerning the proposal of a Methodist Mission to the East?" contain this notation:

The Conference authorizes and appoints Dr. Coke to undertake a Mission to Ceylon and Java; and allows him to take with him six Preachers for that purpose, exclusively of one for the Cape of Good Hope.¹³⁵

On December 31, 1813, the Bishop and six missionaries embarked from Portsmouth. On the morning of May 3, 1814, Coke was found dead on the floor of his cabin. He had apparently died early in the night from apoplexy. At five o'clock in the afternoon of the same day his body was committed to the depths of the Indian Ocean until "the sea shall give up its dead."¹³⁶

Throughout Great Britain and America the news of his death occasioned widespread sorrow. Funeral sermons were preached in the principal Methodist churches of American Methodism. On his round for the year on Circuits, in city churches, and before the assembled preachers in conferences, Asbury delivered memorial sermons eulogizing him as a man "of blessed mind and soul"; a "gentleman and a scholar"; and as a minister of Christ "in zeal, in labors, and in services, the greatest man in the last century."¹³⁷

William Paley (1743-1805), eminent English philosopher and Christian scholar, wrote a summary characterization of the Apostle Paul which in many particulars aptly applies to Thomas Coke:

A man of liberal attainments addicted himself to the gospel, enduring every species of hardship, encountering every extremity of danger, assaulted by the populace, punished by the magistrates, [threatened], . . . expecting wherever he came a renewal of the same treatment . . . spending his whole time in the employment, sacrificing to it his ease, his safety, persisting in the course to old age, unaltered by the experience of perverseness, ingratitude, prejudice . . . unsubdued by anxiety, . . . labor, persecutions . . . undismayed by the prospect of death. Such was Paul.

Such also was Thomas Coke. As Paul blazed an ineffaceable trail for the earliest Christian missions, so Thomas Coke—much more than has been generally recognized—blazed a trail for what Latourette has called the "Great Century" of modern missions, not only for British and American Methodism but for Protestantism. While his career differed greatly from that of Asbury, in his own way he was with Francis Asbury a co-founder of the Methodism of the New World.

EARLY EXPANSION OF METHODISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The *Minutes of the Annual Conferences** for 1784 list forty-six Circuits and Stations. Within five years this number had more than doubled and there had been a phenomenal increase of members.¹³⁸ By the close of the period (1819) the Church had eleven Annual Conferences; some 475 Circuits and Stations; 977 Traveling Preachers; and a membership of 281,146.†

Indication of the geographical spread of the Methodist Movement may be had from the increasing number and location of Annual Conferences.‡ In 1785 and again in 1786 and in 1787 only three were held—one in Virginia, one in Maryland, and one in North Carolina. In 1788 there were six: two in Virginia—one in Uniontown, forty miles southeast of Pittsburgh (later included within the boundaries of Pennsylvania)—one in Tennessee, the first Annual Conference held west of the Allegheny Mountains; and one each in Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia. In 1789, eleven were held, and in 1790 fourteen. Not until 1796 were the bounds of the Annual Conferences fixed. The General Conference for that year decreed that there should be six:¹³⁹ the Baltimore Conference; the Virginia; the South Carolina; the Philadelphia; the New England; and the Western,§ specifying the boundaries of each. In 1800 there were seven. By 1812 the number had grown to eight; and by 1820 to eleven.

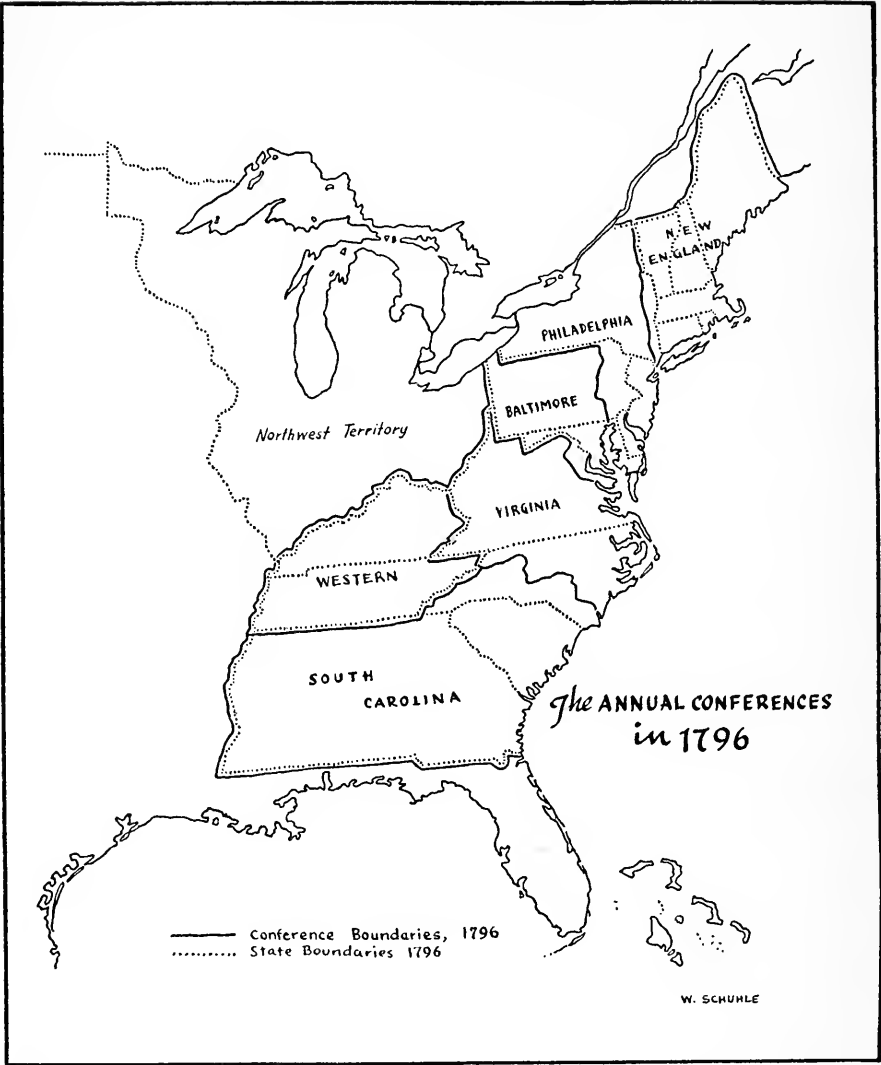
The early Conferences had only a small membership—some very small. Of

* The *Minutes of the Annual Conferences*, commonly referred to as the *General Minutes*, constitute the official record of all the Annual Conferences, including lists of appointments and detailed statistics. They are an invaluable source of information and—inasmuch as the earliest *Journals* of some Conferences have been lost—in some cases the only official record in existence. The *General Minutes* for the early period contain, unfortunately, many errors and omissions. In numerous instances names of preachers and of Circuits are misspelled; in others omitted for a year or even two or more years in succession. For example, in the *General Minutes* for 1812 Chautauqua appears as Shetockway; in 1813 is omitted; in 1814 and 1817 as Chetauqua; and in 1819 as Chetauque. Or, to cite a considerably later example: in the *General Minutes* for 1843, in the appointments of the Illinois Conference, the name of Daniel H. Hutton appears as Halton; William Milburn as Melburn; and James Leaton as Joseph Seaton. Names disappear from the lists without explanation of cause—whether location, expulsion, withdrawal, or death. Beginning with 1792, sessions of the southern and western Conferences were frequently held in the fall and those of the eastern Conferences in the spring yet the *Minutes* of all are brought together under the date of the latter. For example, the *Minutes* of the four Conferences held in the fall of 1792 and the sixteen Conferences of 1793 are all assembled together under the title *Minutes for 1793*. So for every year until 1836, when the custom was changed. Disregard or oversight of this practice led to errors in dates and in citation of statistics in various biographical and historical works on early American Methodism, including Nathan Bangs' *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*. Goss's *Statistical History* apparently depended upon Bangs. To cite one example of many: Bangs in his recapitulation of the numbers in the Church in 1803 uses for the Western Conference the figures given in the *General Minutes* for 1803, viz., 8,202, whereas the number reported at the session of the Western Conference of Oct. 2, 1803, was 9,600.—Cf. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 3ff.

† In 1784 there were 83 itinerant preachers, and 14,988 members of Societies. In 1790 itinerants numbered 227; members, 57,631. Ten years later (1800) there were 161 Circuits and Stations; 287 itinerants; 51,442 white, and 13,452 colored members. By 1810 Circuits and Stations had increased to 347; Traveling Preachers to 606; and members to 139,836 white and 34,724 colored.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 20, 38f., 92f., 183f.

‡ Preceding the organization of the Church the Annual Conferences were not individually organized, all being considered as adjourned regional meetings of the undivided ministry; the enactments of no session being considered final until adopted at all the other sessions. (See A. Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . , II, 11ff.) Up to 1796 determination of number of Annual Conferences to be held was entirely at the discretion of the Bishops.

§ A proviso was included to the effect that the Bishops should "have authority to appoint other yearly conferences in the interval of the General Conference, if a sufficiency of new circuits be anywhere formed for that purpose."



the Conferences held in 1788 that in Georgia had only ten members present—six preachers in full connection and four probationers¹⁴⁰—and the Uniontown (Pa.) Conference twelve preachers in attendance, seven in full connection and five probationers.¹⁴¹ The first Conference held in Maine, in 1798, was attended by ten preachers.

Sessions of Annual Conferences were frequently held in private homes. The North Carolina Conference of 1785—the first following the organization of the Church—was held in the home of Green Hill, a Local Preacher. It included all the preachers of Virginia and North Carolina who could attend, “yet they were accommodated in one country house.”¹⁴² The Virginia Conference for 1787 assembled in the home of William White, “near Rough Creek Church in Charlotte County.” There are numerous other instances in later years.* Doubtless for reasons of economy the towns were shunned as meeting places; the open country preferred. After the turn of the century Conference sessions were often held at Camp Meetings. As the membership of the Conferences increased the settlers’ cabins were not adequate for the accommodation of the preachers, so a Camp Meeting was connected with the Conference and the preachers lived in tents.¹⁴³ The South Carolina Conference for 1808, although held in midwinter, was a Camp Meeting Conference. The organizational session of the Genesee Conference, with sixty-three preachers present, was held “in Captain Dorsey’s granary.”¹⁴⁴

During the entire period many of the Circuits were long, and the Districts covered an extensive territory. Thomas Smith records that at the Conference session in Chestertown, Maryland, in 1805, he was appointed to the Seneca Circuit in the Genesee country of New York, having to travel six hundred miles to reach his field of labor, and that his Circuit was three hundred miles in extent.¹⁴⁵ Elijah Woolsey, appointed in 1803 to take charge of the Albany District, found that the round of the district appointments involved nearly eight hundred miles of travel and an absence from home of between eight and nine weeks.¹⁴⁶ James B. Finley, appointed in 1814 to the Cross Creek Circuit in the Ohio Conference, embracing two counties and a part of a third, preached thirty-two times on every round—an appointment every day and two on Sunday—and met fifty Classes. In 1817, John Stewart, appointed to Little Kanawha, in what is now West Virginia, traveled a Circuit five hundred miles in circumference. Some of the appointments were fully forty miles apart over roads that were merely blazed tracks. “Notwithstanding the utmost care, we would frequently lose our path.”¹⁴⁷

* The first session of the Illinois Conference, Oct. 23, 1824—a joint session of the Missouri and the Illinois Conferences—was held in the home of William Padfield, Looking-glass Prairie, Ill.; the first session of the Holston Conference in the log cabin of General William Russell, Saltville, Va.; and the 1832 session of the Mississippi Conference in the home of John Lane, a Local Preacher, who furnished accommodations for some sixteen preachers, and meals in addition for an indefinite number of transient visitors.

PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH

At the time of the organization of the Church by far the largest proportion of members were in the South. Stevens estimates that in 1784, of the total membership, 13,381 were south of Mason and Dixon's line and only 1,607 north of it.¹⁴⁸ In time this proportion was to change but during the major portion of this period increase of membership was more rapid in the South than in the North. In 1798 more than one-fifth of the entire membership of the Church was in Virginia. Every General Conference up to 1824—with the single exception of that of 1812—met in Baltimore, for the very good reason that during the entire time "Baltimore remained . . . the center of American Methodism."¹⁴⁹

Religious conditions throughout the South—more particularly in Virginia—greatly favored the growth of a vigorous, warm evangelical movement such as was represented by the Methodist and Baptist Churches. The majority of the clergy of the Established Church had deserted their congregations during the Revolution and returned to England.* Many parishes continued for years without incumbents. William Meade, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Diocese of Virginia, says that when he was ordained deacon in 1811 his was the first ordination in a long time—with one exception, that of a man "from a distance and a most unworthy one";¹⁵⁰ that in 1812 the Virginia Episcopal Convention (the first in seven years) was attended by only fourteen clergymen and fourteen laymen; and in the following spring "only seven clergymen attended." He adds, "There was nothing to encourage us to meet again."¹⁵¹ In the Established Church there were earnest people "that feared God and desired to save their souls." Many of these welcomed the coming of the Methodist itinerants to their communities, attended their preaching services, and eventually united with the Methodist Church. The principal cause of the defection from the Episcopal Church in Virginia, Bishop Meade asserts, was to be found "in the irreligious character and defective preaching of the clergy" who, "for the most part, were a laughing stock or objects of disgust" addicted, as many of them were, "to the race-field, the card-table, the ball-room, the theatre—nay more, to the drunken revel."¹⁵² The situation had become so serious that the right of the Church wardens and vestrymen of a parish to eject their rector for drunken and profligate conduct became a legal

* "At the commencement of the War of the Revolution, Virginia had ninety-one clergymen, officiating in one hundred and sixty-four churches and chapels; at its close only twenty-eight ministers were found labouring in the less desolate parishes of the State. . . . Had they been faithful shepherds they would not have thus deserted their flocks." (William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, I, 17.) At the war's end, 23 out of Virginia's 95 parishes were extinct or forsaken. Of the remaining 72, 34 were "destitute of ministerial services" (Francis L. Hawks, *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States of America*, I, *A Narrative of Events Connected with the Rise and Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia* [New York: Harpers, 1836], p. 154). To this Samuel Wilberforce adds, "The flocks were scattered and divided; the pastors few, poor, and suspected; their enemies dominant and fierce."—*History of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (Third Ed. London: Rivingtons, 1856), p. 183.

issue. Thomas Jefferson upheld the right in a learned argument in a case originating in Nansemond County. Religious conditions were similar, though somewhat less serious in Maryland.¹⁵³

The Methodist itinerants were very active in Virginia, establishing preaching places wherever appointments could be made, preaching constantly and in the most out-of-the-way places. John Leland, Baptist chronicler, testified that by 1790 the Methodists had become "scattered all over the state and in some places were very numerous."* The movement of revival which had attained marked proportions in 1776, as previously noted, was renewed in 1785 and increased in momentum until in 1787 it became such a time "for the awakening and conversion of sinners"—according to Jesse Lee—as had never before been seen "among the Methodists in America."¹⁵⁴ The most widespread awakening occurred in "the south parts" of the state—the most remarkable of all in the Sussex and Brunswick Circuits where in the summer of 1787 as many as 1,600 souls, it was thought, were "converted in Sussex circuit; in Brunswick circuit about 1800; and in Amelia circuit about 800." John Dickins wrote to Wesley reporting "not less than seven thousand souls are under deep conviction" in the neighborhood of Brunswick.¹⁵⁵ The entire region between the James and Roanoke Rivers, and from the Blue Ridge to the sea "was swept by the flame of revival."¹⁵⁶

Ten years later (1797) the churches of Virginia were again the scene of an extensive revival during which some five hundred people were added to the membership. In his *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, Bennett records "gracious revivals" occurring also in 1801, 1804, 1806, 1811, and 1817.¹⁵⁷ Before the movement subsided thousands of members had been added to the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches.

The Great Awakening of 1787 extended from Virginia into the adjoining states of North and South Carolina, with many conversions. Of nineteen new Circuits established in 1788, twelve were in the southern states.¹⁵⁸ Writing in April, 1787, Thomas Coke says

When I was in *America* before, there were but twenty in society in this circuit [Pee Dee in South Carolina]: and it was much doubted at the Conference, whether it would be to the glory of God to send even one preacher to this part of the country. But now, chiefly by the means of two young men, *Hope Hull* and *Jeremiah Maston* [Mastin], the societies consist of eight hundred and twenty-three members; and no less than two and twenty preaching-houses have been erected in this single circuit in the course of the last year.¹⁵⁹

Influenced by the general improvement in religious conditions throughout the state, reenforced by the evangelical leadership of Richard C. Moore, con-

* "Their ministers are very constant preachers, and they exceed all societies in the state in spreading their books and tenets among the people."—John Leland, *The Virginia Chronicle: with judicious and critical remarks, under xxiv heads*. (Fredericksburg: T. Green, 1790), p. 101.

secrated as Bishop of Virginia in 1814,* signs of new vigor began to appear in the life and work of the Episcopal Church.

At the Conference held at Lane's Chapel, Virginia, in April, 1786, a call was made for volunteers to go to Georgia "if any . . . felt freedom to offer themselves as missionaries for that service."¹⁶⁰ More men volunteered "than could be spared." Of those who offered, John Major and Thomas Humphries were accepted and "went forth in the name of the Lord."† Georgia and a large part of South Carolina were included within one District, with James Foster as Presiding Elder.

The first Georgia Circuit had been established the previous year (1785).¹⁶¹ The state at this time was thinly settled, with most of the settlements along the creeks and rivers and no roads other than paths and Indian trails. With more than eighty thousand inhabitants, there were in the entire state only three Lutheran churches; three Presbyterian; three Baptist; and three Episcopal, without rectors.¹⁶² There was no Methodist church north of Augusta—nor other place of worship—and "the missionaries preached only in private dwellings."¹⁶³ Major and Humphries "formed a circuit up and down the Savannah river and round by Little river, and the town of Washington," and within the first year "collected together and joined into society four hundred and fifty members."¹⁶⁴ So successful were they that at the 1787 Conference Georgia was made a separate District with three Circuits. By the end of the year there were over eleven hundred members of the Church.

In April, 1788, the first Conference to be held in Georgia was convened by Asbury at "the forks of Broad River." At this Conference Hope Hull—"if not the father of Georgia Methodism, yet the man who was to be second to no other in fostering it"‡—was appointed to the Washington Circuit embracing more "than a half-dozen of the present counties of Georgia."¹⁶⁵ For two years progress was very encouraging but in 1790 a reaction set in. Decline was everywhere registered, to continue for a decade. Prosperous trade with the Indians and the ready increase of slave labor engrossed the minds of the people. There was a shortage of preachers—the only workers inexperienced and uncultivated young men "neither old enough, nor strong enough, for the burden."¹⁶⁶ A storm of theological controversy raged, with the Baptist and Presbyterian advocates of Calvinism the stronger men. The year 1791 saw a decrease of two

* Objections to the election of Moore as Bishop were voiced by some on the ground "that he was somewhat Methodistical," but his sterling character, amiable disposition, popular preaching, and evangelical teaching all contributed to his wide popularity and success.—See W. Meade, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

† The course in Georgia of John Major, who was known as "the weeping prophet," was short. He was not physically able to stand the strain of pioneer work, and died within two years. Asbury characterized him as "a simple-hearted man; a living, loving soul who died as he lived, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, ten years in the work, useful and blameless." (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 30.) Thomas Humphries, who had been an itinerant for three years in Virginia and North Carolina, remained two years in Georgia, and then served for three years on Circuits in South Carolina. He located within the bounds of the Pee Dee Circuit, where he had married a woman of some wealth, and continued service as a Local Preacher.

‡ On the character and ministry of Hope Hull, see II, ch. VI.

hundred members in the state. In 1792 when Asbury came he was burdened to find that some preachers had left and others were leaving the field. The O'Kelly schism contributed to the decrease of preachers and members.* Beginning in 1794 the Conferences previously held in South Carolina and Georgia were combined and thereafter only one, known as the South Carolina Conference, was held annually.¹⁶⁷ Year after year decrease in membership was reported—with one or two exceptions—until 1800, when the tide turned.

The General Conference of 1800 in Baltimore felt the effect of the Great Awakening in the West. Asbury wrote in his *Journal*: "The unction that attended the word was great—more than one hundred souls . . . professed conversion during the sitting of Conference."¹⁶⁸ Presiding Elders and preachers returned to their fields with new zeal. The following year the wave of revival reached South Carolina and Georgia. At the Conference of 1802, increases for South Carolina, 4,112 white and 1,636 colored; and for Georgia, 2,094 white and 400 colored members, were reported. In 1803, a Camp Meeting near Sparta—one of the first held in Georgia—was attended by three thousand people.¹⁶⁹ For years thereafter Camp Meetings increased in number. In 1805 Lovick Pierce—"destined to a renown as wide as the domain of Methodism"—was admitted to the South Carolina Conference on trial and in 1809, not yet twenty-four years old, was appointed Presiding Elder of the Oconee District. In this same year (1809) William Capers† entered upon his long and distinguished career, being admitted on trial and appointed to Wateree Circuit,‡ beginning a ministry that for more than a half century was to honor the Church and prove a benediction to thousands of people. Other young men of marked ability also joined the itinerant ranks and the work of the Church soon began to show the effects of their labors. The South Carolina Conference for 1811 reported eighty-five effective preachers, and a total membership of 20,863 whites and 11,063 colored,¹⁷⁰ a net increase of almost six thousand persons in two years.

To the South the War of 1812–14 brought stagnation of trade, consequent depression, and general uneasiness and fear. Religious interest was undermined, and slow but steady decline in Church membership set in, culminating in 1817–18 in a net loss in the South Carolina Conference of more than twelve hundred members in the two years. Prosperity had returned but moral and religious zeal lagged behind.

* On the O'Kelly schism, see pp. 161f.

† On the life and work of William Capers, see II, ch. VI.

‡ On the Wateree Circuit "there were twenty-four preaching places, and the time of a round was four weeks, the distance about three hundred miles, the membership of the circuit 498 whites and 124 colored."—"Autobiography," included in *Life of William Capers, D.D.*, William M. Wightman (Nashville: Southern Methodist Printing House, 1858), p. 92.

PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE STATES

Despite the fact that in the North, at the time of the organization of the Church, the numerical showing in membership was not impressive, Methodism had become rooted in numerous widely scattered communities in the Middle States. In the state of New York there were Societies in New York City, on Staten Island, and on Long Island; in New Rochelle, and Ashgrove. A new Circuit had been formed on Long Island in 1784.¹⁷¹ There were three Circuits in New Jersey—Trenton, West Jersey, and East Jersey—with one or more Societies in each county of west Jersey and in several counties of east Jersey. In 1786, a fourth Circuit, Newark, was added. This same year, on the East Jersey Circuit there were twenty-seven preaching places—almost all private homes.¹⁷² Some of the Anglican churches were open to Methodist preaching. On November 5, 1786, Ezekiel Cooper preached in the church at Newburgh (New York). The church warden said to him: "You have some enemies; but where one is against you ten are for you."¹⁷³ On the Trenton (New Jersey) Circuit in 1787 there were more than fifty preaching appointments, with at least seven houses of worship under Methodist control—"some of which were constructed during the year."¹⁷⁴ On October 13, 1789, Asbury dedicated the first Methodist Chapel in Wilmington, Delaware, commenting in his *Journal*: "Thus far are we come after more than twenty years' labour in this place."¹⁷⁵

In Pennsylvania, east of the Allegheny Mountains, in 1785 the three Circuits included Societies in Philadelphia; and in the counties of Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Lancaster, and Berks; in the southern tier of counties from York westward to Bedford; and along the Juniata River.¹⁷⁶ As in New Jersey, there was in Pennsylvania some opposition to the activities of the Methodists. Invited to preach at Germantown, Ezekiel Cooper "gladly complied," although the people there, he said, "are generally opposed to us." He was pleased with a comment of one of his hearers: "Germantown is like a fort, but the Methodists, I think, will at last take it."¹⁷⁷ The Circuits of Delaware included Societies in all three counties.

But the large majority of the Societies were small, clearly indicating—in addition to the fact that Anglican churches were fewer than in the South—that the people of these states for some undetermined reason were less responsive to Methodist preaching than those of the South. In 1786–87 prospects seemed to be improving: prejudice appeared to be less pronounced, some new churches were under construction, and in New York a new Circuit—New Rochelle—was established.¹⁷⁸

To the north of New York City during 1788–92 Freeborn Garrettson served as Presiding Elder of a District which in 1788 included "all the circuits [six

in number] from New Rochelle to Lake Champlain."¹⁷⁹ "My custom," he says, "was to go around the district every three months," between trips staying in New York about two weeks for rest. By his ministry and that of the preachers who "traveled under his direction" thousands of people on the new Circuits heard the Gospel proclaimed and "many souls were brought to the knowledge of God."¹⁸⁰ By 1791 Garrettson's District included twelve Circuits, comprising "nearly all the territory now included in the New York and Troy Conferences,"¹⁸¹ and into the new Societies more than 2,500 people had been gathered. But in New Jersey 1788-89 brought a decrease—301 members in 1788, and 295 the next year—a loss which was made up by a gain of 612 in 1790. Lack of more rapid progress and the general conditions he found throughout the middle region at this time disturbed Asbury deeply. In November, 1788, he wrote in his *Journal*:

DELAWARE. *Saturday and Sunday, 22, 23* We crossed Choptank to Bolingbroke—death! death! . . . I preached at Queenstown to a few people, who appear to be far gone in forgetfulness of God. . . .

In other states, it was the same:

NEW YORK. [June, 1789] *Monday, 15* the people appeared like rocks. O that the hammer and fire of God's word and love might come down among them! *Friday, 19.* I preached in a barn on the North River: my hearers were chiefly Low Dutch. . . . I . . . pity our preachers who labour here; it seems as if I should die amongst this people with exertions and grief. . . . *

NEW JERSEY. *Saturday, 27.* Rode to the stone church; and found stony hearts. . . . *Sunday, 28* I am burdened under the spiritual death of the people. . . .

PENNSYLVANIA [July, 1789] *Friday, 3.* Came to Philadelphia. . . . My soul longs for more religion in this city; I am distressed for these people: twenty years have we been labouring in Pennsylvania, and there are not one thousand in society. . . . ¹⁸²

Nevertheless as years passed noteworthy gains were made.†

The General Conference of 1800 constituted a separate New York Conference, distinct from the New England.‡ Beginning about the turn of the century the spirit of revival so remarkably present in the West became manifest—but to a lesser extent in the Middle States. On some of the Circuits conspicuous growth took place. In June of 1802 Thomas Smith recorded having received on probation 247 members in five weeks on the Dover, Delaware, Circuit. At the close of the Conference year he was able to report having taken

* Some of these expressions recur in Asbury's *Journal* in reference to conditions in other sections of the country but his impressions of the spiritual condition of the people in the Middle States appear to have been more uniformly unfavorable than elsewhere.

† From 1796 to 1801, inclusive, increases in the Middle States were: Delaware, 3,011 to 3,828; New Jersey, 2,351 to 3,159; New York, 4,044 to 7,034.

‡ During the quadrennium 1800-03 a number of the New England Circuits, including all of the Vermont and New Hampshire appointments, were within the New York Conference.

into the Church during the year 433 members.¹⁸³ The first Camp Meeting on the Eastern Shore, held in July, 1805, was attended by thousands of people. "I suppose two hundred persons," says Jesse Lee, "were converted among the white people, and many [among] the blacks." This meeting was followed by numerous others at which it "was quite common to hear of fifty or a hundred souls being converted." Intense interest continued during 1806—the revival exceeding "every thing of the kind that had ever been known among them before."¹⁸⁴ During some of these years the New York Conference failed to share in the generally prevailing increase. Each of the years 1803, 1804, and 1805 showed a small decrease in membership. Visiting the city of New York in August, 1804, Asbury was impressed by the spiritual lethargy evident on every hand. New York, he wrote, "in all the congregations is the *valley of dry bones*."¹⁸⁵ But by 1806 a different spirit was in evidence, the Conference as a whole registering a gain of 1,620 in membership, and in 1807, 3,171. In 1808 religious interest in New York City reached high tide. "I never knew so great a revival of religion in the city . . . as what there was at that time," wrote Jesse Lee.¹⁸⁶ Other sections of the Conference also reported heightened religious interest.

Richard Whatcoat (1736–1806) whose itinerant service since the Christmas Conference had been divided between the Middle States and the South—twelve of the fifteen years as Presiding Elder—in 1800 was elected a Bishop of the Church. For several years Asbury had insistently appealed for assistance in his arduous administrative task. At last it had become apparent not only to him but to others that he was physically incapable of bearing the burden alone. Preceding the General Conference scheduled to convene in Baltimore on May 6, 1800, he wrote to several of the preachers in different parts of the country signifying his intention to resign.¹⁸⁷ After long discussion concerning what should be done the Conference by formal action earnestly entreated Asbury to continue his service "as one of the general superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as far as his strength will permit" and voted to elect by ballot one additional Bishop.* On the second ballot Richard Whatcoat was declared to be duly elected by a majority of four votes.¹⁸⁸

Whatcoat was sixty-four years of age, already suffering under severe physical disabilities, and incapable of rendering vigorous service. He was not a man of great native ability or of deep erudition but he was universally beloved for simplicity and beauty of character. The fact that he had been designated for Bishop by Wesley in 1786,¹⁸⁹ and that the impression prevailed among many of the delegates that he was Asbury's first choice undoubtedly aided his elec-

* Whatcoat's account of his election, in his "Journal," is brief and matter-of-fact: "At our General Conference held in Baltimore . . . May the 6th, 1800, I was elected and ordained to the Episcopal office. We had a most blessed time and much preaching, fervent prayers, and strong exhortations through the city. . . ."—William Phoebus, *Memoirs of the Rev. Richard Whatcoat*, pp. 29f.

tion. He was unable to provide the challenging leadership of which the Church at the time stood in need. For several years he traveled throughout the whole extent of Methodism—south, north, east, and west—on many of his journeys in company with Asbury. He records that, in his sixty-sixth year, in his course “through the continent” he traveled “about three thousand seven hundred and seven miles.” In July, 1803, suffering from severe “bodily weakness and fatigue” he was urged by Asbury to lessen his travel. Despite increasing feebleness, complicated by chronic disease, he persevered—making extensive journeys in 1805. On July 5, 1806, he died at the home of former governor Richard Bassett at Dover, Delaware. Stevens pronounces him “pre-eminently the saint in the primitive calendar of American Methodism.”¹⁹⁰

In 1810 the Genesee Conference was formed. In the beginning it was made up of the Susquehanna District from the Philadelphia Conference and the Cayuga and Upper Canada Districts of the New York Conference. The first session was held in a barn, or granary, “at Captain Dorsey’s, Lyons’ Town,”¹⁹¹ with sixty-three preachers present. The entire area of the new Conference was virtually missionary territory and in the older Conferences Asbury was severely criticized “for setting off these preachers to starve.”¹⁹² But there was no attitude of complaint among the Circuit Riders themselves. They were happy to be relieved of the necessity of making the difficult annual journey of two hundred to three hundred or more miles to the eastern Conferences necessitating absence from their Circuits for a period of six weeks to three months.¹⁹³

The oncoming of war was in these years a disturbing influence among the people of the Middle States. Many of the younger men were drawn into the army. For most of the people times were hard; and conditions as a whole had an unfavorable effect upon religion and the churches. This is reflected in a decrease in membership in the New York Conference in 1812, 1814, and 1815; in the Philadelphia Conference in 1814, 1815, and 1816; and in the Genesee Conference in 1813. Nevertheless the period 1800–20 closed with an imposing exhibit of strength for the Methodism of the Middle States. During the two decades the membership of the Church more than doubled. The ministry made a corresponding increase in numerical strength and significant advance in intellectual qualifications and in training. Many Church buildings were erected, including some large and substantial edifices, and the Church gained significantly in public esteem and in influence.

METHODISM PLANTED IN NEW ENGLAND

The seed of Methodism was not sown in New England by popular choice. When the sowers went forth to sow it was not by invitation of the religious or the irreligious. By the established clergy the Circuit Riders during the early

years were looked upon with supercilious scorn; denounced as "wolves in sheep's clothing" and as the "false prophets who should come in the latter day." By laymen—particularly of the "higher class"—they were ridiculed as unlearned and ignorant. The widely prevalent attitude was succinctly expressed in 1793 by a Congregational deacon on the Fairfield Circuit to Thomas Ware:

My advice to you, sir, and to your itinerant brethren, is, to go home; or, at least, to desist from disturbing the order of things among us. We want none of your instructions; and, indeed, *you* are not competent to instruct *us*. You make the people commit sin in the loss of so much precious time as is wasted in attending your meetings on week days when they ought to be at labour; or, on the sabbath, in leaving the places where they ought to worship, to run after you. We have learned and able ministers, and all the necessary means of grace among us, and we do very well without you. Why, then, do you trouble yourselves about us?¹⁹⁴

The clergy—constituting, along with merchants and lawyers, the hierarchy of officialdom—believing that they governed by divine right, were alarmed by the rising democratic spirit in both politics and religion. Anything that pointed in the direction of a free Church was regarded by them as a menace, in self-defense to be resisted by every possible means.

Among the new appointments "read out" by Asbury at the close of the Conference held in New York in May, 1789, was: "Stamford, Jesse Lee." Stamford was then the first town across the border in Connecticut. It was a point from which to start, but what the assignment really meant was all of New England. To the Methodists it was essentially a missionary undertaking—recognized as such by the taking of collections for it "in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New York."¹⁹⁵

The mission had originated in the mind and heart of Jesse Lee, a Virginian. Five years before, Lee had become acquainted with a Massachusetts lad clerking for a merchant in Charleston, South Carolina, who it seems had told him of religious conditions in New England. While he knew how inhospitable New England Calvinism was to other beliefs Lee "was persuaded Methodism could live where men can breathe" and was confident that the independence of spirit and the thirst for knowledge of the New England people would lead them to "hear for themselves."¹⁹⁶

Asbury was not at first favorable to Lee's proposal. As it was, he had more demands for preachers than he could supply from people who wanted Methodist preaching. Besides, New England had no lack of churches and ministers. And, in truth, if meeting houses in themselves were sufficient to supply the spiritual needs of a people New England could not be accounted a mission field. For the land was by law divided into parishes and in every village the meeting house was prominently located. Moreover the law made it the duty

of every citizen to support the Church. Salaries were raised by taxes and for years no one could hold office other than members of a church of "The Standing Order." But as is inevitable under such circumstances religion had become with many a mere form.* Church attendance had declined to a low level, and some parishes for years at a time were without ministers.¹⁹⁷ By the time of the Conference of 1789 Asbury had come to see the matter in a new light and recorded in his *Journal*: "New England *stretcheth out the hand* to our ministry, and I trust thousands will shortly feel its influence."¹⁹⁸

Although the appointment was not made on a selective basis, no better choice could have been made than Jesse Lee. He was young—thirty-one years of age—and vigorous, of imposing physique,† an attractive public speaker, with ready wit, determined in purpose, and there was no fear of man before his eyes. New England churchmen were much given to doctrinal disputation and often after the sermon "would enter into controversy with the preacher, especially upon those points on which he differed from the prevalent doctrines of the day."¹⁹⁹ In such a debate Lee was quite at home and, though his theological knowledge was not profound, he was well able to defend Methodist doctrine and often confounded those who ventured to take issue with him.

Lee lost no time in entering upon his New England mission. The Conference in New York apparently closed on June 7 and on June 17 he preached in Norwalk, Connecticut, what he declares to be "the first Methodist sermon that was ever preached in that place."‡ He set out, he says, "with a prayer to God for a blessing" on his effort, applying first for a private house in which to preach, but was refused. He asked for the use of an old deserted building, but this also was refused. He then proposed to preach in a neighboring orchard but permission for this was denied. Finally, he took his stand under an apple

* Writing concerning the dismissal from his parish of the Rev. Obadiah Parsons, pastor of First Church (Congregational), Lynn, Mass., Feb. 4, 1784-Feb. 22, 1792, Parsons Cooke, years later pastor of the same church, says, "He is represented to have been a man of strong natural talents . . . eminently social in his habits, but more devoted to his own pleasures than to the work of the ministry. He scrupled not to take his place in every scene of conviviality. But in those times such habits might not have discredited him, had there been no grounds of suspicion affecting his chastity."—*A Century of Puritanism* . . . (Boston: S. K. Whipple and Co., 1855), pp. 218f.

† On May 4, 1779, Lee wrote in his "Journal": "After we had finished our business in conference, four of the largest preachers amongst us went to a friend's store, and were weighed. My weight was 259 lbs."—Minton Thrift, *Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee*, p. 249.

‡ In this statement Lee was mistaken. Nor is it true, as has sometimes been asserted, that his was the first Methodist preaching heard in New England. Charles Wesley, returning to England in 1737 from Georgia, stayed a month in Boston and preached in Christ Church and in King's Chapel. George Whitefield had an extensive preaching ministry in New England (1740–70). Richard Boardman preached in Boston in 1772 and formed a small Society but it was short-lived. On his trip to the United States in 1784–85 William Black of Nova Scotia spent some time in Boston (Feb. 1, 1785, to "about the middle of May"), where he preached to immense congregations and awakened much interest. (Matthew Richey, *A Memoir of the late Rev. William Black* [Halifax: William Cunnebell, 1839], pp. 139 ff.) No effort was made to conserve the results of his labors by the organization of a Methodist Society, but his message was remembered and his enduring influence was of value to Lee when he began his New England ministry ("Journal," quoted by M. Thrift, *op. cit.*, p. 110). In 1787 Cornelius Cook preached in Norwalk (A. Stevens, *Memorials of Methodism*, First Series, *Memorials of the Introduction of Methodism into the Eastern States*, p. 48). In the same year, on his return from his mission to Nova Scotia in April, Freeborn Garrettson "not being admitted to any of the pulpits . . . preached a few sermons in some private houses" in Boston, and preached also in Providence and in Newport, R. I. (Nathan Bangs, *Life of Freeborn Garrettson*, p. 164). None of these sporadic efforts resulted in the planting of Methodism in New England.

tree on the public road with some twenty people for an audience. "After singing and praying," he says, he preached on "*Ye must be born again*. . . . After preaching I told the people I intended to be with them again in two weeks."²⁰⁰

Four days later (June 21) he preached in New Haven to "as many people as could crowd into the court-house."²⁰¹ Within a few days he succeeded in forming a Circuit consisting of Norwalk, Fairfield, Stratford, Milford, New Haven, Derby, Newtown, Reading, Danbury, and Canaan, "with several other places within the same bounds." He preached in whatever kind of place could be found: the schoolhouse, the courthouse, a private dwelling, a barn, or out-of-doors under the trees. Of hearers there was no lack: "many people flocked to hear the word," but for some time without response.

New England congregations were made up chiefly of people who were accustomed to attend services of the Established Church, evidenced by such statements in Lee's *Journal* as these:

Monday 19th [October], I preached at Greenwich. . . . The priest and deacon of the place have taken much pains to convince the people of the evil of letting me preach in the parish; and withal, they told the people that if the society is broken up, they must bear the blame. . . .

Friday 23d. At David Olds', in Weston, I preached to a large congregation: the house was much crowded, though it was very large. I suppose the reason why I had so many to hear me, was owing to their minister's preaching against me two sabbaths in succession. . . .

Monday 25th [January] . . . Reading. . . . I was informed he [the minister] talked to his people for some time, and told them, 'to take care how they heard other preachers, and particularly the Methodists,' but the people did not take his advice. . . .²⁰²

At last, on September 26, "the first society . . . was formed . . . in Stratfield . . . [a parish of the town of Stratford] there were . . . three women that joined." Three months later at Reading on December 28, a Class was formed "one man and one woman . . . at first.* It was some months after before any other person joined with them."²⁰³ At the end of seven months of earnest labor a beginning had been made in breaking up the hard ground. Three Classes had been formed—the third at Jacob Wheeler's in Limestone—with an aggregate of eight members. A more hospitable spirit began to be shown. At Fairfield, after preaching on a cold winter night, a widow woman invited him to be a guest in her home: "the first invitation I have had since I . . . came to the place, which is between six and seven months."²⁰⁴ Even more encouraging: reinforcements were sent by Asbury. Lee was in the midst of a Quarterly Meeting at Dantown, the last of February (1790), where a meeting house—the sec-

* What seemed an unpromising beginning proved to be a very significant one, becoming in time "a flourishing society." Aaron Sandford, the first convert, became a Local Preacher; "his brother also, and a lawyer (Samuel S. Smith) . . . and then another of the society began to preach."—Jesse Lee, *A Short History* . . . , p. 148; N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 292.

ond begun in New England—was under construction,* when news was received that Jacob Brush, an elder; George Roberts, and Daniel Smith,† two young preachers, were coming to his assistance. “No one knows,” he wrote, “but God and myself, what comfort and joy I felt at their arrival.”²⁰⁵

Leaving the work that had been organized in the care of the new recruits Lee set out on an exploratory trip through Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island. Arriving in Boston on July 9 and finding no “suitable place where he might deliver his message to the people,” on Sunday afternoon at six o’clock he preached to “a large assembly” on the Commons. The following week he rode 130 miles, preached ten times, returned to Boston and again preached on the Commons “to about three thousand people.” “On the ensuing Sabbath,” for the third time “he preached upon the commons . . . to a much greater multitude.”²⁰⁶ At the Conference which convened in New York on October 4, sixteen months after the beginning of his mission, Lee was able to report having “travelled several thousand miles . . . preached in six states,” and in most places having “met with a much kinder reception than . . . [he] could have expected.”²⁰⁷

Although for five years he had been eligible for ordination, until now Lee had been unwilling to be ordained. At this Conference he gave his consent; “was first ordained deacon in private, and the day following was ordained elder, publicly, with others.”²⁰⁸ In the *Minutes of the Annual Conferences* for 1790 his name appears as “Elder” for the four New England Circuits—Fairfield, New Haven, Hartford, and Boston—but neither in his *Journal* nor in his *Short History of the Methodists* does he make mention of this. Concerning his appointment he says: “I was appointed this year to the town of Boston, in order if possible to establish the Methodist doctrine and discipline, and to raise up a people for the Lord.”²⁰⁹ He spent an entire month (November 13–December 13) “trying to get a house to preach in,” a private house, the court-house, a schoolhouse—any kind of place—but was blocked at every turn. He was beset with discouragement, but finally reassured by a cordial invitation to preach in Lynn, where on February 20, 1791, he organized a Society of “more than thirty members.” In the month of May “upwards of seventy persons took certificates showing that they attended the ministry of the Methodists”‡ in order “to free them from paying their regular quota [the tax re-

* “The first Methodist church ever built in New-England was . . . in the town of Weston. It was called . . . *Lee’s Chapel*.”—N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 292.

† Daniel Smith was classed by Thomas Ware among the “eminent men” of early American Methodism. Although he was located at the age of twenty-five, serving only four years in full connection, Asbury declared that “he had a faster hold on the affections of the eastern people than any other preacher . . . ever sent among them.” (Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware*, pp. 211 f.) Jacob Brush was a victim of the yellow fever epidemic which raged in New York in 1795.—J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered* . . . , pp. 368f.

‡ This action was the culmination of a long-drawn-out conflict in the First Church (Congregational) parish in Lynn. There is lack of agreement on the number who seceded. Parsons Cooke who was installed as pastor of First Church on May 4, 1836, writes: “A list of one hundred and eight names was handed in, indicating that so many had become members of a Methodist society, and ceased

quired by law] to the ministers of the standing order."²¹⁰ The newly organized Society promptly undertook the building of a meeting house "which they began . . . on the 14th of June, raised on the 21st, and dedicated . . . on the 26th (1791) . . . the first regular permanent society that was formed in the state of Massachusetts; and the first meeting house that was ever built for the Methodists in the state."²¹¹

This year (1791) Asbury made his first visit to New England—an extensive tour through Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts—preaching at New Haven, Middletown, New London, Newport, Providence, Boston, Lynn, and numerous other places. On July 19 he came to the city of Hartford. He says:

At Mr. S——'s meeting-house I was attended by three ministers. I was clear not to keep back any part of the truth, whilst I enforced Luke VII, 23. The people were mostly serious and attentive.²¹²

"Mr. S——'s meeting-house" was the First Church (Congregational) of which Dr. Nathan Strong was pastor. On request, Dr. Strong granted permission for the service and announced that Asbury would preach.²¹³ From this time on—with thirteen preachers assigned to New England—progress was rapid. Doors opened on every hand—in many cases doors of meeting houses; in the majority of instances, private houses—and congregations increased in size. More encouraging still, the hearts of the people opened to the message of the preachers.²¹⁴ At the first Annual Conference ever held in New England, convened on August 1, 1792, the Litchfield Circuit reported 429 members; Fairfield, 220; Middletown, 124; Hartford, 195; and Lynn, 118.²¹⁵ A beginning had been made even in Boston. Lee records: "on the 13th day of July, 1792, we joined a few in society, and after a short time they began to increase in numbers."²¹⁶ The members were mostly poor people but with missionary aid a small chapel was built in the summer of 1795. After its completion the congregation became still larger, "especially in the evenings, at which time many who were ashamed to be seen going to a Methodist meeting by daylight would assemble to hear the 'strange doctrine,' as it was called."²¹⁷

At the second Conference held in New England, (Lynn, August 1, 1793) Ezekiel Cooper,* who earlier in the Conference year had been appointed to Boston,²¹⁸ was designated Presiding Elder and Lee was appointed by Asbury to open up the Province of Maine,† which was then a part of Massachusetts

to be taxable to the first parish. This occurred in May, 1791. . . . [It included] some of the . . . leading men of the parish. . . ."—*Op. cit.*, p. 216.

* For sketch of Ezekiel Cooper, his life and ministry, see II, ch. VI.

† This appointment was not to Jesse Lee's liking. According to Ezekiel Cooper, Lee had elected to take "a settlement . . . [at Lynn] according to the laws and customs of the country," even going so far as attempting to have the *Discipline* altered by General Conference, but without success. He engaged in controversy with Asbury, at first insisting on remaining at Lynn. He finally consented "to go to the Province of Maine" but demanded that "his name should be printed to Lynn and Maine both." To this Asbury finally agreed, although it was entirely without precedent. The appointment for the year read: "Province of Maine and Lynn, Jesse Lee."—"Diary" of Ezekiel Cooper in George A. Phoebe, Compiler, *Beams of Light* . . . , pp. 168ff.; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 50.

—a region of dense forests with a mere fringe of settlements along the seacoast and a few towns on the rivers of the interior. On September 9 he crossed the boundary and on the next day “rode to Saco,” preaching in the evening at a house “much crowded with attentive hearers.”²¹⁹ From here he pressed on through Portland, Freeport, Bath, Newcastle, and yet newer settlements—traveling “through the greater part of that country”²²⁰ thence returning to Lynn for a brief respite. In January (1794) he returned “to the settlements on the Kennebeck and Penobscot Rivers, and enlarged his borders by preaching in many new places,” forming the Readfield Circuit, the first in Maine, extending “from Hallowell to Sandy River.” The first Methodist Societies were organized in November (1794) in Monmouth and Readfield.²²¹ That same fall a meeting house was begun in Readfield and was dedicated on June 21, 1795. In 1794, also, the first Methodist church in Rhode Island was erected at Warren.

Two Conferences were held in New England in 1794—one at Lynn beginning on July 25, and the second at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, beginning on September 4—evidence of the spread of Methodism in the northeastern country. Entering New England on July 10, Asbury traveled through Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, again Connecticut, crossing into New York on September 14, having preached thirty-seven times in eighteen towns and cities. Two years later, at the General Conference of 1796, the New England Conference was constituted as one of the six Annual Conferences of the Church. In that year Methodists in New England numbered 2,999: Connecticut, 1,201; Massachusetts, 913; Rhode Island, 177; Province of Maine, 616; New Hampshire, 92.²²²

This was not a particularly impressive showing, yet it was sufficient to create widespread alarm among the defenders of the Standing Order. During the earlier years the Methodist Movement had not been taken seriously. By most of the clergy the itinerants were regarded as more or less fanatical, but harmless intruders, whose enthusiasm would not last. It was now apparent to all that the Movement was not ephemeral, that it was systematically planned, and that many of the Circuit Riders were men of completely dedicated lives who were determined never to own defeat. It was evident, moreover, that the Methodist teaching was not only making converts among the poor but winning influential adherents. Ridicule gave way to overt hostility. At intervals for many years preachers in various communities suffered persecution: Elijah R. Sabin was knocked down and struck on the head with the butt of a gun; Abner Wood was horse-whipped; Epaphras Kibby was stoned while preaching; Joshua Taylor was drummed out of town. Others suffered similar indignities. The Methodists were scathingly denounced from many pulpits.*

* Opposition was in part based upon misunderstanding of Methodist teaching. Nathan Bangs writes,

Magistrates, especially in Connecticut, refused to recognize ordained Methodist ministers as legitimate clergymen. At least one minister—George Roberts—was prosecuted and fined for performing a marriage ceremony. Several laymen who refused to pay the tax for the support of the Established Church were imprisoned or fined. In some communities it was a dangerous thing to be a Methodist. A town meeting in Provincetown, Massachusetts, voted that the Methodists should not be allowed to build a meeting house, and when the little Society went ahead with their plans the preacher was burned in effigy and the timbers that had been collected and hewn for the building were wrecked.* Thomas Ware, appointed in 1794 Presiding Elder of a District including several New England appointments, wrote:

I am obliged to say that, during the three years of my labors in this section, I have found not so much as one friendly clergyman. There may have been such; but all with whom I conversed, or whose sentiments I knew, were violent in their opposition to us;† and the rough manner in which I was usually treated by them, rendered me unwilling to come in contact with them.²²³

That a better feeling prevailed among some of the more prominent leaders is evidenced by the fact that when the first Methodist meeting house was building in Boston subscriptions of five to ten dollars each were made by the Rev. James Freeman, pastor of King's Chapel; the Rev. John Murray, Universalist leader; and the Rev. Jedidiah Morse, pastor of the First Church in Charlestown.²²⁴

The year 1795 was marked by the organization of the first Methodist Society in New Hampshire. The next year a Vermont Circuit—called Virshire—was formed, although earlier there were some Societies in the state attached to Circuits lying principally in other states. For the first time it could now be said that Methodism was represented in every state in the union. Registering

"Their objections . . . were generally founded upon the erroneous representations drawn by themselves as an inference from what they had heard, that the *Methodists held to salvation by the merit of good works*. This they inferred from the denial of the doctrine of *irresistible grace*, unconditional and personal election and reprobation, and not because that dogma had ever been asserted; for no such doctrine had ever been held or promulgated by Mr. Wesley or any of his preachers."—*Op. cit.*, I, 291.

* ["F]or four months a nightly guard of four Methodist brethren, armed with loaded muskets, was set, while all the male members slept with clubs at hand, ready to run to the defense of their slowly rising Zion. The church went up, its members thrived on the persecution . . . and after a while, having a majority at the town meeting, they voted the old society out of their church and took possession of it themselves. . . ."—James Mudge, *History of the New England Conference*, pp. 230 f.

† The opposition and overt antagonism encountered in New England by the Methodist Circuit Riders occasioned animadversions toward the ministry of the Established Church. Considered by themselves, they present a one-sided picture. Asbury's sour comment, on the occasion of his first visit, in June, 1791, is an example: "I do feel as if there had been religion in this country once. . . . There may have been a praying ministry and people here; but I fear they are now spiritually dead. . . ." is a case in point. (*Op. cit.*, II, 118.) A needed corrective is supplied by the characterization of the clergy of Fairfield County, Conn., by Samuel G. Goodrich: "Dr. Ripley of Green's Farms . . . was a large and learned man—two hundred pounds avoirdupois of solid divinity. He read the Bible in the original tongues for diversion, and digested Hebrew roots as if they had been buttered parsnips. He was withal a hale, hearty old gentleman, with a rich, ruddy smile over his face, bespeaking peace within and without. . . . In manners they [the clergymen] were polite, and somewhat assiduous in their stately courtesies . . . as father, neighbor, friend, citizen . . . [men] in a large and generous sense . . . counselors in religious matters—in the dark and anxious periods of the spirit—in times of sickness, at the approach of death. . . . Such were . . . the Congregational clergy of Fairfield County, doubtless to some extent examples of their brethren throughout New England."—*Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 176ff.

only in slight degree the effect of the nationwide declension in religion, New England Methodism during the Conference year 1795-6 suffered a net decrease of fifty-six in membership.

In 1797 began in Connecticut what sometimes has been called the Second Great Awakening in New England—a phase of a nationwide revival of religion. During 1798 and 1799 the movement spread until not less than 150 New England towns had experienced “religious upheavals.”²²⁵ Beginning in the Congregational churches, the revival spirit spread throughout entire communities, affecting all denominations and multitudes outside the churches. It differed from the Great Awakening of 1740, and from the Great Revival of 1800 in the West, in not being accompanied by the peculiar physical manifestations which accompanied the emotionalism of those movements. With few exceptions the physical phenomena indicative of extreme distress, fear, or joy were absent and “the manifestations . . . like the presentations of truth with which they were associated, were distinctly, and even severely, intellectual.”²²⁶ Conviction of sin and consciousness of forgiveness were not lacking but the expressions of contrition and of joy appear to have been distinctly different in form.

On August 29, 1798, the first Methodist Conference held in Maine convened at Readfield. The little village was thronged with the hundreds who attended. “It was a good time,” records Lee in his *Journal*, “. . . a very solemn time . . . a precious time to many,”²²⁷ but there was no excitement and no noisy demonstrations. So also at Granville, Massachusetts, where a second Conference convened on September 19. Tidings of spiritual victory came from all directions. On Granville Circuit more than forty new members had been received. Pittsfield reported more than seventy-five accessions. On the Middletown (Connecticut) Circuit many had been converted and forty-two received into the Church. Similar reports were presented from other places. The new Societies of Vermont had received more than two hundred converts. Altogether there had been an increase of about one thousand. This accelerated rate of growth continued throughout the first decade of the new century. The Methodism of New England gained in the ten years 11,753 members, an average for each year of more than 1,175. By the close of the first decade Methodism was permanently established in every state in New England.*

From October, 1797, to June, 1800, Jesse Lee was engaged in traveling with Asbury at his request as his general assistant, relieving the Bishop of many preaching engagements and aiding him in various ways.²²⁸ Returning to

* Explanation of the rapid growth of Methodism in New England during these years is asserted by a non-Methodist historian to have been: “the strong character of the itinerant preachers; the intense fervor which appealed to many who were turning away from the colder intellectualism of the Congregational divines; the democratic spirit of Methodism; and the religious unrest of the time.”—Jacob C. Meyer, *Church and State in Massachusetts from 1740 to 1833* (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1930), p. 139.

New England on June 28 (1800) he set out on July 22 on an extensive tour through New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, Lower Canada, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, riding 1,263 miles and preaching eighty-nine sermons in twelve weeks.* He found occasion to rejoice in the progress of the Gospel during his absence, finding the people "much more alive to God" than when he had left them. Again in 1808 (July 2–Sept. 30) he made a preaching tour through New England, his visit—particularly in Maine—being "the most profitable and pleasing . . . I had ever made in that part of the world."²²⁹

As in all regions of the country, religious progress in New England during the second decade of the century was hindered by disturbances incidental to war. Many New Englanders were bitterly opposed to the war measures, and the harmony of the Societies was disturbed. Embargoes on foreign shipping wrought severe economic hardship, particularly in the seacoast towns. All things considered, the churches did well to hold their own. Nevertheless there was steady though slow growth. By the close of the decade Methodist membership in New England numbered almost 25,000; its itinerant ministry 125, besides some hundreds of Local Preachers.

BEGINNINGS IN THE WEST

The *General Minutes* record appointments in 1784 to two Circuits in the West: in the more southern trans-Allegheny region, "Holston: Henry Willis";† and beyond the Pennsylvania Alleghenies, "Redstone, John Cooper, Samuel Breeze." Even before this, however, Methodism had been planted west of the Alleghenies and the beginnings of its growth nurtured by Local Preachers. During the war many emigrants had crossed the mountains—among them Robert Wooster, a Methodist Local Preacher. As early as 1781 he is known to have been preaching at Beesontown (later, Uniontown), Pennsylvania, and there is record of at least one person being converted under his ministry.²³⁰ Preachers appointed to the Allegheny Circuit the preceding year (1783) also had penetrated the Redstone country.‡ As was his invariable cus-

* Jesse Lee has been justly called the Apostle of Methodism to New England. Abel Stevens speaks of this tour as "the conclusion of his [Lee's] great mission" in New England. (*History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America*, IV, 287.) At the General Conference of 1800, on the first ballot, he failed of election to the episcopacy by only five votes. He was stationed in New York City during January–February, 1801; served for four years as Presiding Elder in Virginia, and as a Circuit Rider also for four years. He was Chaplain of the House of Representatives, 1809–13; and Chaplain of the Senate, 1814–15. He died on Sept. 12, 1816, in his fifty-ninth year.

† Henry Willis (? –1808), a native of Brunswick County, Va., gained the reputation of being an eloquent preacher, "mighty in the Scriptures, and a profound and eloquent reasoner." His ministry was widely extended. He was the first Methodist preacher stationed in Charleston, S. C.; and the first who served effectively in the Holston country. He was also a member of the first Book Committee of the Church, appointed by the General Conference of 1792. In 1788–89 he was Presiding Elder of the New York District and during 1789–90 served a District extending from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Ill health necessitated repeated location, but as repeatedly he resumed the effective relation. For extended obituary, see *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 157f.

‡ The "Redstone Country," a region of indefinite boundaries, embraced the valleys of Redstone Creek and Youghiogheny and Monongahela Rivers. This designation for the area was carried over from the name "Redstone Old Fort," the site of prehistoric Indian earthworks where Brownsville, Pa., is now located. The Methodist preachers had been preceded in the Redstone country by the Baptists,

tom, Asbury followed his appointees to their virgin field. Under date of July 1, 1784, is this entry in his *Journal*: "We began to ascend the Alleghany, directing our course towards Redstone." On the seventh he preached to nearly seven hundred persons at Beesontown who impressed him as being "serious and attentive," but the next day at "D——s" his hearers seemed to him to be "a wild people."²³¹ In 1785 three preachers—an addition of one—were appointed to Redstone Circuit and the *Minutes* for 1786 report 523 persons "in society."²³² The region "into which our missionaries entered, and . . . occupied under the name of Redstone," embraced a large area of Pennsylvania and Virginia (now West Virginia).²³³ Four years after his first visit Asbury returned for the first Annual Conference in the region. Whatcoat was present, and eleven other preachers. At this Conference took place the first Methodist ordination west of the Alleghenies (July, 1788).^{*} Somewhat farther west, at Marietta, on the Ohio River at the mouth of the Muskingum, the first permanent Ohio settlement was established in 1786 by the Ohio Land Company, organized in Boston on March 1 of that year. It was made up of a typical group of New Englanders from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Connecticut.²³⁴ Here, during their first year, was organized a Congregational church of thirty-one members.²³⁵

The "Holston country" was a general name for a considerable area embracing the headwaters of the Holston and Kanawha Rivers in what is now east Tennessee and southwest Virginia. On the Holston Circuit Henry Willis had been preceded by one year by Jeremiah Lambert. We have almost no particulars of Lambert's work nor of that of Willis on the Circuit, but Thomas Ware, then preaching on Long Island, together with John Tunnell,[†] his Presiding Elder, and two other young men who "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than earthly treasures," volunteered to answer a call that had come from "persons low down the Holston and French Broad [Rivers], deploring their entire destitution of the Gospel," and asking that preachers be sent.²³⁶ He was first appointed to the Nollechuckie Circuit; then in May, 1788, Asbury "came to Half-Acres and Keywoods," where for three days Conference was in session—the first Annual Conference west of the Allegheny

Lutherans, Moravians, and Presbyterians—James Finley, Presbyterian pioneer minister having arrived in 1765 and the Redstone Presbytery having been formed in 1781.—Jacob S. Payton, *Our Fathers Have Told Us* . . . , pp. 25ff.; G. S. Klett, *Presbyterians in Colonial Pennsylvania*, pp. 82ff.

* "The person ordained was Michael Lord [the name appears in the *General Minutes*, I, 29, 31, as Michael Leard], of whom it was said that he could repeat nearly the whole New Testament off the book and large portions of the Old."—J. F. Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

† John Tunnell (1755–1790), a Virginian, was admitted on trial in 1777 and appointed, with William Watters and Freeborn Garrettson, to the Brunswick (Va.) Circuit. He traveled widely during his early years in the ministry. In 1786 he was made Presiding Elder of a District including East Jersey, New York, and Long Island. The following year his District was in the Holston country. Stricken with consumption, he died in 1790 at thirty-five years of age. Asbury characterized him as a man "of good learning; . . . [with] a large fund of Scripture knowledge; . . . a good historian, a sensible, improving preacher, a most affectionate friend, and a great saint."—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 37; R. N. Price, *Holston Methodism* . . . (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1908), I, 177ff.

Mountains. It was held under unfavorable conditions. Asbury records that the weather was cold; there was no fire in the room; and general discomfort prevailed. He comments laconically: "We nevertheless made out to keep our seats, until we had finished the essential parts of our business."²³⁷ At this Conference Ware was appointed to East New-River. He has given us a brief account of his ministry on the two Circuits and of the circumstances under which he labored. He found the Holston country "infested with savage men, the deadly foe of white men who had but too justly incurred their resentment." Several families had been recently murdered by the Indians along the routes he had to travel. He discovered some Methodists "who had come from distant parts and brought their religion with them," who welcomed the missionary and, taking the lead, were followed by many "in the service of the Lord." Within a short time there was a flourishing Society. On going to the East New-River Circuit he was "instructed" (doubtless by Asbury) to enlarge its borders "from a two, to a four weeks' circuit."²³⁸ It was a virgin field. Within all its bounds there was not a religious meeting of any kind except those held by himself and his colleague. The hearts and the homes of the people were open and during the year eighty were received into the Church. At the next Conference Ware was appointed to the Caswell Circuit in North Carolina.

"In 1786 . . ." writes Jesse Lee, "we took in five new circuits . . . one in Kentucky, called after the state, Kentucky." Here again the regularly appointed missionaries, James Haw and Benjamin Ogden, had been preceded by Local Preachers who had prepared the ground for their sowing.* Of these one of the most active and influential was Francis Clark, from Virginia, a man "well instructed in the doctrines of Methodism" and "of sound judgment," who with John Durham, a Class Leader, settled in Mercer County, near Danville, where they organized the first Methodist Society in Kentucky. Another Local Preacher was William J. Thompson from North Carolina, who preached "with acceptance and success," later becoming a member of the Western Conference. A third was Thomas Stevenson, whose wife was one of Strawbridge's converts, in whose cabin at Kenton's station in Mason County James Haw found a home, there organizing the second Methodist Society. Only about a decade had passed since Daniel Boone had penetrated the wilderness and with six families had founded his settlement, four of his men being killed by Indians and as many more wounded. It was a "luxuriant country," and word of its rich soil soon reached land-hungry people in the East. Despite perils from Indians immigrants poured in, hundreds of them every month. By 1784 the population was numbered by the thousands and already

* As early as 1776 the Baptists began preaching in Kentucky, one of the preachers being the Rev. William Hickman of Virginia who went to Kentucky "on a tour of observation" but spent much of his time preaching the Gospel. The first Presbyterian minister was the Rev. David Rice who emigrated from Virginia in 1783.

the "Conestoga" wagons that brought goods from Philadelphia were returning laden with grain. James Haw, who had been designated "Elder" by Asbury, was an able and energetic minister and under his leadership, with such associates as Francis Poythress, Wilson Lee, and Thomas Williamson, expansion was rapid.²³⁹

After one year in Kentucky, Benjamin Ogden was appointed to the Cumberland Circuit in middle Tennessee. The Circuit included Nashville and all the forts and settlements on the north side of the Cumberland River—extending down in the direction of Clarksville, "up the stream to Gallatin and beyond," including a small area of southern Kentucky.²⁴⁰ This "missionary of the cross," says Lewis Garrett in his *Recollections of the West*, "preached the gospel in those forlorn settlements with some success, and returned the next year sixty-three church members."²⁴¹ In 1788 Ogden was succeeded on the Cumberland Circuit by James Haw and Peter Massie,* "who had much fruit, and returned at the next Conference 394 white and ten colored members."²⁴²

By 1790 so widely extended was the work that two Conferences were scheduled—one in Kentucky and another in the Holston country. After an arduous and perilous journey through "the wilderness," with a company "of sixteen men having thirteen guns," in the course of which he passed the graves of twenty-four persons recently slain in one camp, Asbury reached Lexington on May 13. In his *Journal* he declares himself exceedingly pleased with preachers and people—that he would not "for the worth of all the place, have been prevented in this visit," assured that it would be for the good of the rising generation. The Conference "fixed a plan for a school," naming it Bethel, and upwards of £300 was raised "in land and money towards its establishment."²⁴³ Asbury's visit apparently imparted new stimulus to the work for, starting at the Conference session, a revival began which spread through a wide area of the state. The following year (1791–92) also saw many accessions to the Church with an increase of membership on every Circuit. As the fruit of six years, the *Minutes* (1792) report four Circuits, manned by nine preachers, and 1,708 members "in Society."

Asbury's *Journal* for 1790 makes no specific mention of a session of the Holston Conference but that one was held may be inferred† from his statement that during three days "spent at General Russell's" he ordained two Local Preachers "to the office of deacons."²⁴⁴

The remarkable record of numerical growth and geographical expansion of these early years was followed by a period of spiritual drought in Ken-

* The *General Minutes* (p. 31) are in error in stating that David Combs and Barnabas McHenry were this year assigned to the Cumberland Circuit.—Letter of Barnabas McHenry, *Western Methodist*, May 15, 1823, quoted by John B. M'Ferrin, *History of Methodism in Tennessee*, I, 55f.

† This inference is strengthened by the fact that Jesse Lee in his list of fourteen Conferences held in 1790 includes one "at Holstein" (evidently Holston) on the 17th of May.—*Op. cit.*, p. 160.

tucky, and to a lesser extent in the Holston country. During the years 1793–98 inclusive the Methodist Episcopal Church in Kentucky suffered a serious decrease in membership, with no increase in number of Circuits.²⁴⁵ These were years of recession in the East and the South but in those regions because of heavy emigration many of the states suffered a decrease of population whereas in Kentucky the population almost trebled.*

The General Conference of 1796 in fixing the bounds of the Annual Conferences defined the territory of the Western Conference²⁴⁶ as “the states of Kentucky and Tennessee”† but in practice it included all of the far-flung area claimed for Methodism by the adventurous band of itinerants west of the Alleghenies‡ in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia west of the Kanawha River, and sections of Mississippi and Louisiana—excepting only the Circuits in the Redstone country, which were included in the Monongahela District of the Baltimore Conference. Although he was in Tennessee in April, 1797, Asbury did not attend the Conference held in Kentucky in May of that year. The time had come when, though unwillingly, he felt compelled as he says, to “save myself.”²⁴⁷ His physical strength was seriously depleted and while he reserved to himself the making of a plan for the stationing of the preachers he found it necessary to leave the detailed care of the Western Districts and the presiding at the Conferences to others—not attending the Holston in 1798 or the Kentucky in 1799. But in company with Whatcoat he held the Western Conference in 1800 which convened at Bethel Academy, Kentucky, on October 6. He was back again to hold the Conference of 1801.

The spiritually dry years (1792–98) were succeeded by one of the most remarkable revivals of religion in the nation’s history. Strangely enough the awakening began in Logan County, Kentucky—the county which some years earlier had borne a reputation for extreme lawlessness and ruffianism. The first evidences of a changed spirit were noticed in his congregation in 1797 by James McGready, a Presbyterian minister. In 1798 the increased interest in religion spread. In 1799 concern was still deeper and more widely manifest. In a meeting at Gasper River, wrote McGready, many persons were so struck with deep heart-piercing convictions that their bodily strength was

* Reasons for the failure of the expansion of the preceding years to continue are not entirely clear. A. H. Redford assigns the following: (1) the O’Kelly schism, which strongly affected Kentucky because the state had been chiefly settled by emigrants from Virginia; (2) “the prevalence of infidelity,” accentuated by the influence of the French Revolution; (3) the preoccupation of the preachers with theological controversy. (*The History of Methodism in Kentucky*, I, 248ff.) Each of these reasons seems pertinent. Redford also cites “the legislation of the Church on the subject of slavery” in 1780, 1783, and 1784. It may be asked however, if this was a retarding influence, why did it not act during the years 1784–92.

† The General Conference of 1804 amended the action of 1796 to read: “The Western Conference shall include the states of Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio, and that part of Virginia which lies west of the great river Kanawha, with the Illinois and the Natchez.”—*Journals of the General Conference*, I, 53.

‡ For some unexplained reason Asbury continued to designate the Annual Conferences by their place of meeting—using the terms “Kentucky” and “Holston” instead of “Western” (see *Gen’l Minutes*, I, 71, 77, 83, 89, 95, 101). Not until 1802 does the name “Western Conference” appear in the *Minutes*.

quite overcome "so that they fell to the ground and could not refrain from bitter groans and outcries for mercy."²⁴⁸ Simultaneous revivals occurred among Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist congregations. The revival spread over all of Kentucky and Tennessee, into North and South Carolina, western Virginia, western Pennsylvania, and southern Ohio. The rising tide reached its crest at the Cane Ridge meeting in August, 1801. This was a union meeting of Presbyterians and Methodists and people came from all parts of Kentucky, from Tennessee, and from north of the Ohio River. Thousands were in attendance—some estimate as many as 25,000. "To an onlooker the scene presented the greatest confusion—six or seven ministers preaching at the same time, the crowd shifting as one lifted his voice higher than the other, or otherwise engaged their attention."²⁴⁹ In May, 1802, Asbury wrote in his *Journal* of the many letters he had received "conveying the pleasing intelligence of the work of God in every State, district, and in most of the circuits in the Union."²⁵⁰ All in all, Jesse Lee declared, the year 1802 "was the most prosperous . . . that the Methodists had ever seen in the United States."²⁵¹ But 1802 was exceeded by 1803. Members to the number of 17,336 were added to the Church—"a much larger number than we had ever added in any one year." Not only so: "ministers and people were uncommonly devoted to God; and much engaged to promote his cause." The movement continued unabated until the close of 1803, and was not greatly lessened until 1805. It was in the early meetings of this revival that Camp Meetings had their origin.*

The military victory of General Wayne and the ceding by the Indians in the treaty of Greenville (August 3, 1795) of almost the whole of east and south Ohio opened to settlement an immense area, formerly practically closed by the Indian belligerency. Much of the land was widely known to be in every way highly desirable for agricultural purposes and the fact that the Northwest Ordinance (1787) had in its sixth article forbidden slavery made it the more attractive to many who wished to escape its evils. The third article of the Ordinance, reading "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall for ever be encouraged," magnified the appeal of the region to emigrants who hoped for better religious and educational opportunities

* Jesse Lee: "About this time Camp Meetings were first introduced. But I never could learn whether they began in the upper parts of South Carolina, in Tennessee, or in Kentucky." (*Op. cit.*, p. 279.) The time and place of origin are quite clear. John McGee, a Presbyterian minister, an associate of James McGready, wrote under date of June 23, 1820, to the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, Methodist, describing his participation in a meeting on Red River, in Kentucky, in 1799 saying, ". . . from this meeting Camp-meetings took their rise. One man for the want of horses, for all his family to ride, and attend the meeting, fixt up his waggon, in which he took them and his provisions, and lived on the ground throughout the meeting. . . . The next popular meeting was on Muddy river [September, 1799], and this was a Camp-meeting: a number of waggons loaded with people came together, and camped on the ground. . . ." (Letter, *The Methodist Magazine*, IV [May, 1821], 189ff.) "The meeting on Muddy River . . . was attended by a large concourse of people from far and near. They came on foot, on horseback, and in wagons, and camped on the ground. This meeting was the origin of camp-meetings in the United States. . . ."—A. H. Redford, *History of Methodism in Kentucky*, I, 266.

for their families. An extensive immigration set in from New England, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky. By 1800 the population was 45,365. A district between the Scioto and Little Miami Rivers had been reserved in 1784 for bounties to Virginia continental troops and was colonized chiefly by emigrants from that state. They established Massieville (Manchester) in 1790 and Chillicothe in 1796. A company of New Jerseymen, organized by John Cleves Symmes in 1788-1792, secured a Congressional grant to a district between the Great Miami and Little Miami Rivers. Their principal settlements were Columbia (1788) and Cincinnati (1789). The area known as "the Mad River Country" was entered chiefly by emigrants from Kentucky.²⁵²

Among the Kentucky emigrants were numerous Methodists—so many, in fact, that in some places, large Societies were entirely broken up,²⁵³ and in others only a few were left. This resulted in appeals being made from the territory for preachers, and John Kobler* volunteered to be the first itinerant to attempt the organization of a Circuit north of the Ohio River. In 1798 he began work in the Northwest Territory—forming the Miami Circuit, reporting at the end of the year ninety-eight white members and one colored. He describes the settlements† as "few and far between; and little or no improvement about them."²⁵⁴ The *Minutes* for 1799 include the Circuit for the first time: "Miami, Henry Smith."²⁵⁵ Smith gives an account of his appointment and a day-by-day journal of his activities, in which the following statement appears:

Lewis Hunt, a young man from Kentucky, was appointed to travel the Miami Circuit, in the year 1799.‡ . . . We had heard that he was broken down, and I was sent to take his place. . . . We . . . found him so far recovered as to be able to go on in his work. My instructions were, that if he should be able to continue in the work, to go up to Scioto, and form a circuit there. We consulted our friends, and formed the plan of uniting Scioto to Miami, and making a six weeks' circuit of it. This plan was, however, abandoned, on account of the great distance between the circuits, and the dismal swamp we would have . . . had to pass through every round. . . .²⁵⁶

* John Kobler (1768-1843), a native of Virginia, was admitted into full connection in the Methodist ministry in 1792 and appointed to the Greenbrier Circuit in western Virginia (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 44, 46). For some seventeen years he labored with zeal and success on the western frontier. In 1809, prostrated by ill health, he returned to the East and located, later becoming a superannuate of the Baltimore Conference. For obituary, see *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 465f.

† The site of Cincinnati, John Kobler says, was "nearly a dense and uncultivated forest. No improvement was to be seen but Fort Washington, which was built on the brow of the hill, and extended down to the margin of the river; around which was built a number of cabins in which resided the first settlers. . . ." (Letter to the Western Historical Society, quoted by James B. Finley, *Sketches of Western Methodism*, p. 170). James B. Finley says that "the original proprietors of the town were Presbyterians." A Presbyterian society was organized in 1790. Also a Baptist church in 1797 in Columbia (later a suburb of Cincinnati). Not until 1809 does the Cincinnati Circuit appear as a Methodist appointment of the Miami District—the next year reporting 821 members. In 1804 the first Methodist sermon was preached by John Collins, then a Local Preacher and farmer, who lived on "the East Fork of the Little Miami in the wilderness." Shortly afterward a Class of eight members was formed by John Sale. "Old Stone" church was dedicated in 1806.—J. B. Finley, *op. cit.*, 102 *et seq.* Cf. Anon., *A Sketch of the Life of Rev. John Collins* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Power, 1849), pp. 15ff.

‡ The name of Lewis Hunt does not appear in the *General Minutes*.

He reports finding a small Society "at Peter Rankin's"; a second "already formed by Joseph Moore [evidently a Local Preacher]"; a third—"a considerable society"—at "Scioto Brush Creek," also "already organized by brother Moore"; and at Pee Pee a few "who had been in society in various places," whom he brought together into a Class. In 1800 he "succeeded in building a small loghouse" at Scioto Brush Creek—"the first meeting-house on the circuit and perhaps the first in the North-Western territory." In 1799 (October 15) he preached in Chillicothe with some success. In 1800 and in 1801 Smith was reappointed to the Scioto and Miami Circuit—the *Minutes* for 1800 reporting 255 whites and two colored members "in Society"²⁵⁷—and in 1802 returned to Kentucky, being succeeded on the Circuit by Benjamin Young and Elisha W. Bowman.

Beginning with 1787 the *Minutes* include in "the Redstone country" an Ohio Circuit. This however did not enter the Northwest Territory but "stretched along the frontier settlements of the Ohio River in Western Pennsylvania and Virginia."²⁵⁸ However in 1800 the entry, "Muskingum and Hockhockin" Circuit: "Jesse Stoneman," appears, and in 1801 109 members were reported. When in 1803 the Ohio appointments were set off from the Kentucky District as the Ohio District, with William Burke* as Presiding Elder, this Circuit was taken over into the new District and divided into two Circuits—the Muskingum and Little Kanawha, and the Hockhockin.²⁵⁹

Meanwhile Methodist Local Preachers had been at work in the extreme northeast area of the Northwest Territory. When the eastern states ceded their territorial claims to the federal government, Connecticut, the last to act, in 1786 excepted a strip bordering on Lake Erie for 120 miles, known as the Western Reserve.† Against formidable odds a Methodist Society was organized at Deerfield in 1801, and in 1802 a second Class at Hubbard. In 1803 Deerfield Circuit appeared as an appointment of the Pittsburgh District, Baltimore Conference, and in 1805 was combined with the Erie Circuit. Despite the difficulties steady growth continued year after year.²⁶⁰

The Western Conference by 1804 had four Districts—Holston, Kentucky, Cumberland, and Ohio. The ten Circuits of 1796 had increased to twenty-five.²⁶¹ The method used in forming a new Circuit is described by Jacob

* William Burke (1770–1855), a native of Virginia of Irish ancestry, was admitted on trial in 1792 and appointed, by his own account, to the West New River Circuit, on the headwaters of the Kanawha River. His next appointment, for 1793–94, was Danville (Ky.) Circuit. During the Conference year 1794–95 he served for two quarters, the Salt River Circuit, including Washington, Nelson, Jefferson, Shelby, and Green Counties, receiving in six months "only money sufficient to buy a waistcoat, and not enough of that to pay for the making. . . ." Few pioneer preachers saw harder service than William Burke. From 1800 to 1811 he was Secretary of the Western Conference. In 1813, depleted in health and strength, he requested the supernumerary relation, and obtained appointment as postmaster at Cincinnati. (See "Autobiography" in J. B. Finley, *op. cit.*, chs. II, III.) On later years of Burke's life see II, ch. IV.

† The Western Reserve was ceded to the government in 1800 on condition that Congress would guarantee the titles which had previously been granted by the state.

Young,* appointed in 1802 with James Gwin as his colleague, to form a Circuit on the Green River in Kentucky. They found the "vacant territory" too large to be embraced in one Circuit so they agreed that Gwin would take the western part and Young the eastern. His starting point was the Rev. Noah Lasley's house, where he preached "on Sabbath day":

I found myself at a very great loss to know how to form a circuit, in that vast wilderness, and had no one to instruct me. I . . . set off, on Monday, . . . I concluded to travel five miles . . . then stop, reconnoiter the neighborhood, and find some kind person who would let me preach in his log-cabin, and so on till I had performed the entire round. I set out early, but had to travel ten miles before I found a preaching-place. I was directed to call on an old gentleman by the name of Step. I found him cribbing his corn. . . . 'I am a Methodist preacher, sent into this country to try to form a new circuit.' He rose up, looked me full in the face, exclaiming, 'You are a Methodist preacher?' . . . 'Yes.' 'Come into the house,' . . . I . . . found a very neat log-house, pretty well furnished. 'Now . . . this is your home.' . . . The next day, he sent out his servants and gathered in a good congregation. I preached, and had a delightful meeting. . . . The next day I travelled five miles, and stopped at the house of Mr. Guthrie. Here I found a congregation waiting for me. . . . I immediately formed a society there. . . . Next day, I had a long ride through a dreary country. Late in the evening I came to a little log-cabin, standing in the woods, with no stable or out-buildings of any kind. Seeing a woman in the door, I rode up and . . . said to her, 'I am a Methodist preacher sent by Bishop Asbury to try to form a circuit.' . . . Her countenance changed, and her eyes fairly sparkled. . . . 'La, me! has a Methodist preacher come at last? . . . Mr. Carson is not at home, but we will do the best we can for you, with a glad heart!' . . . Her husband had been a class-leader, for some years, before he left his native state. . . . By the time I came round again, they would have it [the house] ready for me to preach in. I spent the evening pleasantly, and by the time day dawned, was on my way in search of another appointment. . . . In the evening I stopped at the house of a man by the name of Honnel; he was in pretty good circumstances . . . had a convenient house, and very willingly opened it for preaching . . . the next day [I] preached to a small congregation; . . . and in the afternoon went on my way rejoicing. Late in the evening I came to a Mr. Cooper's . . . a local preacher. . . . Next morning . . . the word was circulated, and at eleven o'clock, the congregation began to come together . . . we had an excellent meeting; and . . . organized a small class; and, having tarried one night longer, the next morning I started early. . . . About ten o'clock, we halted at Mr. M'Cowan's; here I was astonished to find a large congregation assembled. . . . This being the Sabbath, they had come, hoping to meet the preacher, hearing there was one on his way to form a circuit. . . . Here I found a class, of about fifty members, ready formed to my hand. . . . It was formed by a local preacher who had resided several years in that vicinity. . . . I regulated matters, and appointed a class-leader. . . . Before night, I met with a man, who gave me a cordial invitation to preach in his house, where, finding a small society already organized I made them a class-paper, appointed them a leader. Here . . . a young man . . . Joseph Williams† . . . [who] believed he was called to

* Jacob Young (1776-1859), a native of Pennsylvania, was admitted on trial in the Western Conference in 1803 and appointed to the Barren Circuit. His life in the ministry is described in interesting fashion in his *Autobiography of a Pioneer*.

† Two years later, Oct. 2, 1804, Joseph Williams was admitted on trial in the Western Conference and appointed with James Quinn to the Hockhocking Circuit.—*Gen'l Minutes*, 1, 122, 131.

preach . . . wanted to travel with me. . . . He had his horse, saddle, and saddle-bags in readiness. . . . [He] looked rather unpromising, but . . . I accepted his offer. . . . We traveled about twenty miles on . . . Fishing creek, and put up with an old gentleman by the name of Chappel. . . . There was a Methodist society in the neighborhood, the preacher . . . a colored man, by the name of 'Jacob.' . . . Every member had been awakened under his preaching . . . although he could not read a word, he could preach a pretty good sermon. . . . [His] master . . . would read for him Saturday evenings, and when a text was read that suited Jacob, he would . . . memorize the text, book, chapter, and verse; then he was ready. . . . The next day was the Sabbath. The congregation was large, and I found his society in excellent order. I preached several times, and left . . . on Monday morning, crossed the Cumberland river, went out into a beautiful valley . . . and stopped at Mr. Walker's. . . . He smiled, and observed, 'We are very suspicious of strangers in this country! . . . [They put me] through a very severe course of examination. My horse was put away, and I was invited to dine. . . . Dinner being over . . . I took my departure, rode about eight or ten miles, and called at the house of Elliot Jones. [He was] a local minister . . . well read in the holy Scriptures. . . . [H]e gave me much wholesome advice. . . . We formed a large society. . . . The next day I rode eight or ten miles, and stopped with . . . John Francis. He was sheriff of Wayne county, and a backslidden Methodist, but his wife was a very pious woman. . . . He took me in and made his house my home. . . . I . . . moved on toward the west. . . . [I stopped] at a tavern, a man called at the door [and] . . . inquired if there was not a Methodist preacher there. . . . He said he understood I was forming a circuit . . . and wanted me to take in his house [ten miles away] for one of the appointments. . . . At a very late hour we arrived at a small log-cabin. . . . [It had] . . . no floor . . . neither bedstead, chair, nor table. I saw no cupboard furniture, excepting some earthen bowls. . . . The woman . . . was badly crippled. . . . I spread down, for my bed, a blanket that I kept under my saddle . . . my overcoat . . . my covering. . . . [Breakfast] consisted of corn-bread and milk—no spoons. . . . Breakfast being over I . . . spent the forenoon in reading and praying, till preaching-time. . . . [Then I found] the cabin pretty well filled with men and women. Although it was late in November, many of them had neither hats nor bonnets on their heads, nor shoes on their feet. . . . I went from this place into Stogdon's valley [where Mr. Talbot] . . . gave up his house for a preaching place. His wife was a Methodist. . . . I [next] . . . went to Sprowle station; left an appointment, rode . . . to Burkesville, and staid all night at Burke's tavern. . . . [H]e had been a Methodist . . . now . . . backslidden. . . . He [said] . . . if I would preach, he would fit up a large room to accommodate the congregation. . . . The next day was the Sabbath. I preached in the bar-room. . . . I came the next day to Mr. Wisdom's. He called in his neighbors, who filled the house. . . . The next day I rode six or seven miles to Dulin's meeting-house, where I found a large congregation waiting. . . . After preaching they held a prayer meeting, which lasted nearly all the afternoon. They were principally Presbyterians. . . . They had no settled minister, but had a good supply from a distance. . . . Next morning . . . I mounted my horse and rode away. . . . Coming to a little cabin standing in the barrens, I tarried all night there, preached next morning, and in the afternoon rode to the Rev. Noah Lasley's, the place where I began. . . . I had been gone three weeks, and had formed a full four weeks' circuit. . . . I compared myself to a man settled in a wilderness, who had built his cabin, surveyed his land, and was preparing to clear his farm.²⁶²

The young Circuit Rider made the round of his new Circuit ten times during the year—preaching almost every day, often also at night—reading the *Discipline*, organizing Societies, visiting, and expounding the Scriptures around the firesides of his people, and taking into church membership 301 persons. For his year's labor he received in support "not quite thirty dollars."

The great revival in the West had been under way for some time when at the Conference held at Holston in May, 1801,* William McKendree (1757–1835)—a Virginian—was appointed to the Kentucky District which as later arranged included the state of Kentucky, middle Tennessee, a part of Ohio, and the Natchez country in Mississippi. The time was propitious for the type of leadership he was so well able to supply. His "extraordinary fervor," exceptional ability as a preacher, and his intense activity—it was his constant practice to travel from thirty to fifty miles a day, and preach at night, besides visiting families, organizing Societies and holding Quarterly Conferences—soon made his influence felt throughout his immense District. When the Western Conference assembled at Gerizim, near Cynthiana, Kentucky, on October 2, 1804, it was learned that Asbury had been taken ill on his way to the session and that neither he nor Whatcoat would be in attendance. The Bishops not having designated anyone to preside in their absence, the choice of a president devolved upon the Conference. The election of McKendree and the eminently satisfactory way in which he presided added to his prestige. When, in 1807, the time came for election of delegates to the General Conference he was at the head of the delegation of seven elected members.²⁶³ By 1808, the two Districts of the Western Conference had increased to five; membership, approximately three thousand in 1801, had grown to sixteen thousand; and the little band of a score of itinerants had become more than three score. As the outstanding Methodist leader of the West, McKendree's fame had spread throughout the Church and, although few of the members outside of his own delegation had ever seen him before the convening of General Conference, when on May 12 the delegates proceeded to elect a Bishop, of 128 ballots cast William McKendree received 95 votes, the first native-born American Bishop of the Church.²⁶⁴

Election to the episcopacy had little effect on McKendree's program and habit of life. Two months after his election he was back in Tennessee, whence he fared forth on a long and arduous tour through Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, into Missouri. Six days after crossing the Ohio River he recorded in his *Journal* that some who "had attempted to go through the prairies" but had

* There were two Conference sessions held in 1801 within the area of the Western Conference: one as stated above held in Asbury's absence and a second in "Tennessee at Ebenezer, Oct. 1," (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 101; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 36f.) At the latter session the Western Conference Circuits were divided between two Districts—the Kentucky District, William McKendree, Presiding Elder, with nine Circuits in Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and Mississippi, to which fourteen preachers were assigned; and the Holston District with four Circuits, six preachers.

given up the attempt "advised us not to try it; but we resolved to go, trusting the Lord." He comments, "*Lying out was no hardship*, but the water was extremely bad, and the flies intolerable." Turning back from St. Louis he reached Fountain Head, Tennessee, on August 26, having attended six Camp Meetings, ridden hundreds of miles on horseback "without roads, bridges, or boats, frequently swimming creeks and rivers, [and] sleeping many nights in the woods. . . ." Little wonder that for two weeks he was ill—worn down with fatigue and exposure.²⁶⁵

This extensive trip to a frontier section never before visited by a Methodist Bishop had significant results. "Many people," wrote Robert Paine—years later himself a Bishop—

had conceived the Bishops to be men clothed with power dangerous to society. They had considered them ecclesiastical dignitaries, inaccessible to the people, surrounded with wealth and pomp, and ruling with almost absolute authority. Bishop McKendree's appearance and manners were well calculated to correct such views, and remove the prejudices formed under such representations.²⁶⁶

At the 1805 session of the Western Conference, a fifth District—the Mississippi—was formed, Learner Blackman designated Presiding Elder, and appointments made to four Circuits. However, the genesis of work in Mississippi Territory (organized in 1798) antedated this action by at least six years. In all the annals of American Methodism no more moving story can be found than that of the heroic service of Tobias Gibson—declared by his brethren to be a man who "did for many years preach, profess, possess, and practise Christian perfection."²⁶⁷ His was a frail body, and after eight years' strenuous Circuit riding—following his admission on trial in 1792—in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia his strength had so far failed that he was left without an appointment "with liberty to travel where he pleased for the benefit of his health." Hoping to make his travels of some benefit to others he concluded to go to the Natchez country in Mississippi and set off "by himself without being sent by the Conference,"²⁶⁸ traveling six hundred miles on horseback to a point on the Cumberland River, where he embarked on a skiff, making his way down the Cumberland to its mouth, thence down the Ohio to the Mississippi, then taking passage on a flatboat down-river to Natchez, arriving in March, 1799. There "his ministerial labors were so much owned of the Lord that he was satisfied the Lord had directed him to that part of the world." Returning report to the South Carolina Conference of January, 1800, of sixty members in Society, his name was entered in the *Minutes* for 1800 as regularly appointed to Natchez.²⁶⁹ In the *Journal of the Western Conference of 1801* his appointment appears among those of the Kentucky District.²⁷⁰ Four times he made the trip through the wilderness, an overland journey of six hundred miles, appealing for missionaries to be sent to his assist-

ance. On January 1, 1804, he preached for the last time and on April 5 passed to his reward.*

At the Western Conference of 1804 Learner Blackman and Nathan Barnes were appointed to the Natchez Circuit and the following year (1805) Blackman, as stated above, was made Presiding Elder of the Mississippi District. In 1807 he was succeeded by Jacob Young.† In 1811 the District reported nine Circuits, twelve preachers, and 789 members.²⁷¹

Of the four Circuits of the Mississippi District, the Appalouzas was in Louisiana. The Louisiana Purchase, consummated in 1803, opened up a vast new field for missionary expansion.‡ Shortly after the accession of the territory, Asbury called for missionaries and in 1805 Elisha W. Bowman§ volunteered "to explore . . . the American settlements" in a region in which it was estimated that three-fourths of the inhabitants were French and not more than one in fifteen could understand an English sermon. Searching out the widely scattered English-speaking settlers, he visited from house to house, fixed preaching appointments, and at the end of the year reported seventeen members "in Society."²⁷² It was a difficult field for Protestantism and although heroic service was rendered year after year by men of dauntless spirit, little progress was made. When in 1812 the Louisiana District (Tennessee Conference) was formed its three Circuits, Rapids, Attakapas, and Washataw, listed only ninety-nine members,²⁷³ and five years later, when the District was included in the newly organized Mississippi Conference, appointments were made to two Circuits only—Attakapas and Washataw in which the preaching places of the Rapids Circuit were absorbed. At this time the total membership was only 161 persons.²⁷⁴

The Ohio District was formed at the session of the Western Conference held in October, 1803—William Burke the first Presiding Elder; Circuits five in number, with eight preachers. It expanded rapidly, in 1808 reporting eight

* A few miles south of the city of Vicksburg in Warren County stands a marble column, a monument to the memory of Tobias Gibson. It is still visited by devout Methodists as a shrine sacred to the memory of a man of uncommon sanctity.

† To Learner Blackman (1781-1815), a native of New Jersey, Jacob Young pays a remarkable tribute. Blackman, he says, "was a man of extraordinary natural and moral courage. . . . He feared no danger, dreaded not the tongue of slander, while he was doing and suffering for the glory of God. Whatever he thought ought to be done, he thought could be done. . . . He was a very genteel man, of fine person, of refined manners, and mind well stored with general knowledge. . . . He was perfectly at home among the middle class, he never neglected the poor, he loved both the slave and the slave-holder, and in return was honored and loved by them both. . . . I found it hard work to follow him. . . . He was truly a wise man, turning many to righteousness."—*Autobiography of a Pioneer*, pp. 219f.

‡ By the Louisiana Purchase, involving a territory of approximately one million square miles—about five times that of continental France—the United States doubled its former area.

§ Elisha W. Bowman's name appears in the *Gen'l Minutes* of 1801, as appointed to the Scioto and Miami Circuit (Ohio). In 1803 he was admitted into full connection in the Western Conference and appointed to New River in the Holston country. In 1805, his appointment read "Appalouzas" (Opelousas). With great difficulty he succeeded in reaching the region and although the outlook was most unpromising persevered until he had laid secure foundations for Methodism, reporting at the 1807 Western Conference forty members in Society. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 104, 114, 119, 139, 159.) The story of his missionary service is told by John G. Jones in *A Complete History of Methodism . . . Mississippi Conference*, I, 135f.

Circuits, seventeen preachers, and 3,884 members. In 1811, Circuits having increased to nineteen with 10,104 members, it was divided and the Miami and Muskingum Districts were formed.

Of two Circuits newly formed in the Ohio District in 1806 by the missionary-minded Presiding Elder, John Sale, one—the Whitewater Circuit*—to which Joseph Oglesby,† a man of superior talent, was appointed, extended into Indiana. Several years earlier—in 1801—two Local Preachers, Samuel Parker and Edward Talbott, had crossed the Ohio River from Kentucky and held a two days' meeting at Springville.²⁷⁵ The following year (1802) William McKendree, crossing the Ohio in a canoe, organized two Classes—one in Charlestown, Clark County, the other at New Chapple. In 1803 the Charlestown settlement and the Robinson neighborhood, five miles north, were made regular appointments on the Salt River Circuit (Kentucky). Four years later (1807) they were made a part of the Silver Creek Circuit—"the first entire circuit in the territory of Indiana." "With the organization of this circuit, Indiana Methodism starts on its separate career."²⁷⁶ The Western Conference in 1808 established the Indiana District, Samuel Parker, Presiding Elder, incorporating in it the Whitewater, the Silver Creek, and the Cold Water (apparently a new work) Circuits; and, in addition, also the Illinois, the Maramac, and the Missouri Circuits—the latter two in Missouri.

In the intervening years preceding the outbreak of the War of 1812-14, substantial growth was registered in Indiana as in other sections of the West, the Whitewater Circuit in 1811 reporting a membership of 567; the Silver Creek Circuit, 381; and the Enon Circuit, which had been split off from the Whitewater in 1810, 306.²⁷⁷

Illinois first appears in the *Journal of the Western Annual Conference* for 1803 as one of the Circuits of the Cumberland District.²⁷⁸ Benjamin Young, with the whole of the "Illinois country"‡ open to him for conquest, had a difficult year. He started out under a cloud of suspicion and doubt; he was coldly received by the pioneer settlers of Kaskaskia; and his horse was stolen by the Kickapoo Indians. Nevertheless, he succeeded in forming five Classes, report-

* In the *General Minutes* for 1807 (I, 149) it is mistakenly called the "White River" Circuit. The story of the founding of this Circuit is told in *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana*, William Warren Sweet, pp. 5ff. There had been Methodist preaching in Indiana several years earlier, and at least two Methodist Classes had been organized.

† Joseph Oglesby (1782-1852), a Virginian, was admitted on trial at the Western Conference of 1803 and assigned, with John Sale, to the Miami Circuit. In 1804 his appointment was Illinois—the second appointment to the territory. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 114, 119, 131.) During this year he crossed into Missouri and preached in the Murphy Settlement, now Farmington. Located in 1809 because of ill health, he reentered Conference in 1811 and again located in 1815. Readmitted to the Indiana Conference in 1832, in 1834 he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Bloomington District, serving for two years. He was considered a man of acute intellect, an effective preacher, and an able administrator.—W. S. Woodard, *Annals of Methodism in Missouri*, pp. 8f.

‡ The "Illinois country" from 1800 to 1809 was included in the territory of Indiana. When in the latter year it was organized as the Territory of Illinois it included, in addition to the present area of the state, all of Wisconsin except the north part of the Green Bay peninsula, a considerable part of Michigan, and all of Minnesota east of the Mississippi. It was admitted as a state in 1818 with delimited area.

ing at the end of the year sixty-seven members.²⁷⁹ As in other regions, the ground had been prepared in advance by Class Leaders and Local Preachers. First among them, so far as is known, was a Virginian, Captain Joseph Ogle, who came to Illinois in 1785 and, though converted under Baptist preaching, became an active Methodist.²⁸⁰ Joseph Lillard, a Local Preacher of Kentucky, visiting the Illinois country in 1793, formed a Methodist Class and appointed Captain Ogle as Leader. This Class was the first organized Methodist group in the Territory, and Lillard "was preceded only by the French Catholic priests, and by James Smith a Separate Baptist preacher."²⁸¹ Next was Hosea Riggs, an Exhorter, or Local Preacher, who came to Illinois in 1796. He revived and reorganized Captain Ogle's Class. Another was John Clark,* a devout Scotchman and an ardent lover of liberty, who had been a Circuit Rider in South Carolina from 1791 to 1796 but had withdrawn from the regular ministry on account of slavery, being unwilling to receive for support money that had come from the proceeds of the toil and sweat of human servitude.²⁸² Appointed to the Illinois Circuit, following Benjamin Young, were: 1804, Joseph Oglesby, who was to achieve recognition in later years as one of the strong men of early Methodism;²⁸³ 1805, Charles R. Matheny; 1806, Jesse Walker—the first appointment to Illinois of a pioneer missionary who was to return again and again, and to whom the Methodism of Illinois doubtless owes more than to any other one person; and 1807, John Clingan. Growth during these years was not as rapid as in some regions of the West, but some progress was made. In 1808, the Illinois Circuit was transferred to the newly formed Indiana District, and in 1811, reporting 341 members, was made a part of the new Illinois District, Samuel Parker, Presiding Elder—the five Circuits divided between Illinois and Missouri. The War of 1812–14 intensified the trouble with the Indians, and the scattered settlements almost without exception were involved in a life and death struggle for existence.²⁸⁴

In 1806 Missouri appears for the first time in the records of the Western Conference. Twelve men were received on trial—among them John Travis,† "who came properly recommended from Illinois Quarterly Meeting Conference," and was appointed to form the Missouri Circuit.²⁸⁵ He was the first Methodist preacher assigned to the vast region known as Upper Louisiana, although John Clark had repeatedly crossed the Mississippi from the Illinois side to preach as early as 1798.²⁸⁶ Also, in the early part of 1806 Jesse Walker and Lewis Garrett, at the direction of McKendree, had gone in to spy out the

* About 1798 or 1799 Clark formed a small Methodist Class, for some time holding regular meetings with the members, near Bellefontaine, a few miles north of New Design.—John Mason Peck, *Father Clark, or The Pioneer Preacher* . . . , p. 235.

† John Travis (1773–1852), a native of South Carolina, at the close of his first year reported two Missouri Circuits with 106 members. In 1807 he was sent to Mississippi. After eight years as a Traveling Preacher, he married and located. Following his location, he studied medicine and practiced for many years, continuing to preach in the local ministry. He held positive convictions, which he never hesitated to defend with vigor.—W. S. Woodard, *op. cit.*, pp. 2f.

land.²⁸⁷ Settlers had begun to enter the region even before the Louisiana Purchase. After the return of the Lewis and Clark expedition in September, 1806, immigration rapidly increased. Settlements were established along the Mississippi, southward from St. Louis, and it was among these new arrivals that Travis found most of his converts. McKendree, quite as prone as Asbury to follow up the young men sent out as missionaries to blaze new trails in the wilderness, came in the summer of 1807 to the aid of Travis "and led in the preaching at the first Camp Meeting ever held in Missouri." With him were Abbott Goddard, James Gwin, and Jesse Walker. Crossing the Mississippi, "they walked forty miles, carrying their baggage, to the scene of the Camp Meeting." At the 1807 session of the Western Conference Travis was able to report two Circuits established—the Missouri, with fifty-six members, and the Maramac with fifty members. By 1811 membership had increased to 172 on the Missouri Circuit and to 147 on the Maramac. The first Methodist preacher "raised up on the west side of the Mississippi," according to John Scripps, was Thomas Wright who was licensed to preach in 1809, "a man of sterling worth;" the second John Scripps himself,* and the third John C. Harbison, a lawyer, received on trial in 1814.²⁸⁸

The General Conference of 1812 met in the city of New York on May 1. This was the first delegated General Conference of the Church. Eight Annual Conferences were represented by ninety delegates of whom thirteen were from the West. The 2,300 members of the Western Annual Conference of 1796 had increased to more than 30,000; the number of Circuits from seven to sixty; the Traveling Preachers from 15 to 100; Presiding Elders from two to twelve. The vast territory included within the twelve Districts was clearly too great an expanse longer to be administered within one Annual Conference. Instead, two were constituted: the Ohio Conference† to include the Salt River, Kentucky, Miami, and Muskingum Districts together with "that part of the work . . . of the Baltimore Conference lying northwest of the Rivers Ohio and Alleghany"; and the Tennessee Conference to include the Holston, Nashville, Cumberland, Wabash, Illinois, and Mississippi Districts.²⁸⁹

The newly formed Ohio Conference convened on October 1, 1812, in Chillicothe, then the capital of the state, with thirty-four of the forty-four members present. Fifty-three Circuit Riders were appointed to the Circuits of the

* John Scripps (1785-1865), born in London, England, was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in 1814 and appointed to the Patoka Circuit. He was received into full connection at the first session of the Missouri Conference (1816) and elected as its secretary, serving for twelve years. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 251, 261, 288.) He was a ready writer and furnished many contributions to periodicals, including a series of articles—an account of his itinerant ministry—in the *Western Christian Advocate* in 1843. He was regarded in his time as the most able preacher in the Missouri Conference.—W. S. Woodard, *op. cit.*, pp. 18f.

† Geographically the Ohio Conference included all of Ohio, approximately half of Kentucky, western Virginia, western Pennsylvania, southeastern Indiana, the southwestern portion of New York, and later the entire Territory of Michigan; the Tennessee Conference all of Tennessee, western Kentucky, the area of Mississippi along the river, and all the settled country west of Indiana.

six Districts. Seven years later the membership of 23,284 had grown to 35,056; the six Districts had become seven, and of the fifty-four Conference members all but three were present at the 1819 session.²⁹⁰ There were strong men within the Conference membership during those years—men of heroic mold, sterling character, and intellectual ability, whose qualities of leadership would have given them pre-eminence in any assembly and success in any enterprise. Among the more outstanding were James Quinn, Jacob Young, Charles Holliday, Marcus Lindsey, William Swayze, John Sale, James B. Finley, Benjamin Lakin, and Moses Crume. Among the younger men of distinction were Henry B. Bascom, Thomas A. Morris, Charles Elliott, Leroy Swormstedt, John P. Durbin, and Alfred Brunson. As might be expected the Journal of the Conference for the period is taken up almost wholly with minute business—routine disciplinary actions, principally relating to the admission, advancement, and retirement of the preachers, and account of their meager receipts and supplementary allowances.

The newly organized Tennessee Conference convened in its first session at Fountain Head, Sumner County, Tennessee, on November 12, 1812. Fifty-five preachers were assigned to the fifty-one Circuits of the seven Districts. By 1819 the one Conference had become three—the Tennessee; the Mississippi (formally organized in 1816, although for three years the preachers had met in a separate session under the presidency of one of their own number, each year sending their minutes to Tennessee to be incorporated in those of the Tennessee Conference); and the Missouri (also organized in 1816). The membership of 22,699 had grown to 31,318; the seven Districts had become fourteen; and 109 Circuit Riders were assigned to the eighty-seven Circuits of the three Conferences.²⁹¹ For four years, 1812–16, the work in Illinois was included within the Tennessee Conference. In 1812 there were two Districts: the Illinois District, with one Circuit, Jesse Walker, Presiding Elder; and the Wabash District, with two Circuits, Peter Cartwright, Presiding Elder—the first of his fifty years in the presiding eldership. Concerning his appointment he wrote:

At this Conference I was appointed by Bishop Asbury to the Wabash District . . . composed of the following circuits, namely: Vincennes, in the State of Indiana; and Little Wabash and Fort Massack, in Illinois. . . . The balance of the district was in Kentucky. . . . I told Bishop Asbury that I deliberately believed that I ought not to be appointed presiding elder, for I was not qualified for the office; but he told me there was no appeal from his judgment. . . . We had through the summer and fall of this conference year some splendid camp-meetings, many conversions, and many accessions to the Church.²⁹²

When the Missouri Conference was organized by the General Conference of 1816 the Illinois District was incorporated in it as one of its two Districts,

its four Circuits in Illinois reporting 768 members. By 1819 its Circuits numbered five;* and the membership of four of the five, 1,452.²⁹³

When organized, the Missouri Conference, in addition to the Illinois District, consisted of the Missouri District only—eight Circuits with 949 members. Immigrants had begun to stream into Missouri by 1816 from the southern states—particularly from Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky and by 1819 the Missouri membership had increased to 1,289. A second District, Black River, had been organized in the Arkansas country with four Circuits and 475 members.²⁹⁴

The Mississippi Conference met in its first session presided over by a Bishop "at William Foster's, 10th October, 1816." Bishop Robert R. Roberts was in charge, and eight preachers were present. Appointments were made to nine Circuits (two Districts) scattered over a wide area of Mississippi, western Alabama, and Louisiana. By 1819 the two Districts had increased to three, with eleven Circuits and 2,631 members.²⁹⁵

By the close of the second decade of the century the Methodist Episcopal Church which had begun its corporate existence thirty-five years before with a few score Societies had become the second largest denomination† in the United States.²⁹⁶

Its missionary zeal and spiritual vitality were such that it had established Societies even in the most forlorn and out-of-the-way places of the eastern mountains and had penetrated to the farthest outposts of the western frontier. It included within its membership a cross section of the total population—some in the front rank of civil and political life, many of the rising middle class, and a host of the common people of the nation. So rapid had been its growth that its own leaders shared in the general astonishment, again and again warning its ministers to beware of undue pride and exaltation lest the humility, zeal, and rigor of discipline which had so largely constituted the strength of the Movement should be impaired.

RISE OF AN AMERICAN MINISTRY

During this period of little more than a third of a century the character of the Methodist Movement was completely altered. From a missionary enterprise directed by John Wesley as an overseas extension of British Wesleyanism it was transformed into an indigenous American Church, self-directed and wholly American in spirit. In the beginning the Methodist Societies, so far as they had any ecclesiastical character or connexion, were Societies of the Church of England. Up to 1784 the preachers, other than the mission-

* The *General Minutes* for 1820 give no statistics of membership for the newly formed Mt. Carmel Circuit.

† The Methodist membership was exceeded only by that of the regular Baptist Church, which began in America more than 125 years earlier. It was more than double that of the Presbyterian Church; and eleven times that of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

aries commissioned by John Wesley, were mostly immigrants from Great Britain. In 1773, William Watters who during the preceding year had toured Virginia as an exhorter with Robert Williams, was admitted on trial and appointed to the New Jersey Circuit. In 1774, according to the *General Minutes*, Watters and Philip Gatch, also Maryland-born, were admitted into full connection. With this beginning, within a few years a native American ministry was raised up.

The new generation of preachers was not only predominantly of American birth: it also included men of independent and democratic spirit. As was soon demonstrated they were determined that the new Church should be self-governing, and that decisions should be made in the Conferences by the vote of the majority—not imposed by the will of one man, neither John Wesley, Francis Asbury, nor any other. When at the Conference of 1787 Thomas Coke contended that the Conference was obliged to accede to Wesley's designation of Richard Whatcoat as joint Superintendent with Asbury because the Christmas Conference had said that during the life of Wesley "we acknowledge ourselves his Sons in the Gospel, ready in Matters belonging to Church-Government, to obey his Commands,"²⁹⁷ exception was quickly recorded in no uncertain terms. Many declared that they had not been present when the engagement was entered into and did not consider themselves bound by it. Others, who admitted having said they were "ready to obey his commands," asserted that they were not now ready to obey. The further argument was advanced that Wesley, in England, could not determine who was qualified to govern "as well as we could who were present, and were to be governed." Finally, the position was taken that the action was not a *contract* made with Wesley but an agreement among themselves, from which they were free to depart. Jesse Lee adds, "We then wrote a long and loving letter to Mr. Wesley, and requested him to come over to America and visit his spiritual children."²⁹⁸

Much as they loved and honored Wesley, comments Thomas Ware, "there was not one of the preachers inclined to submit" to his dictation. Ware's interpretation is significant for the light it throws on the spirit and motive of the action:

Mr. Wesley had been in the habit of calling his preachers together, not to legislate, but to confer. Many of them he found to be excellent counsellors, and he heard them respectfully on the weighty matters which were brought before them; but the right to decide all questions he reserved to himself. This he deemed the more excellent way; and as we had volunteered and pledged ourselves to obey, he instructed the doctor [Coke], conformably to his own usage, to put as few questions to vote as possible, saying, 'If you, brother Asbury, and brother Whatcoat are agreed, it is enough.' To place the power of deciding all questions discussed, or nearly all, in the hands of the superintendents, was what could never be introduced

among us—a fact which we thought Mr. Wesley could not but have known, had he known us as well as we ought to have been known by Dr. Coke. . . . In the first effusion of our zeal, we had adopted a rule binding ourselves to obey Mr. Wesley; and this rule must be rescinded, or we must be content, not only to receive Mr. Whatcoat as one of our superintendents, but also, as our brethren of the British Conference, with barely discussing subjects, and leaving the decision of them to two or three individuals. This was the chief cause of our rescinding the rule.²⁹⁹

This action, as Thomas B. Neely says, was “an ecclesiastical Declaration of Independence.”³⁰⁰ It was regarded as that, and more, by Wesley who questioned how far this disavowal of his authority might lead to departure from his principles as Methodism’s founder.* So incensed was Wesley when he heard of the action that he took Asbury severely to task—going so far as to question why he did not insist on compliance on penalty of breaking with the Conference. Asbury apparently had had no part in the discussion but he revealed a measure of independence in his comment on Wesley’s statement:

Mr. Wesley blamed me, and was displeased that I did not rather reject the whole connexion, or leave them, if they did not comply. But I could not give up the connexion so easily, after labouring and suffering so many years with and for them.³⁰¹

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Gradually during this first period the constitutional organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church was evolved. While Wesley designed—so far as is certainly known—no pattern of organization for the American Societies, leaving them as he wrote to Coke and Asbury, “at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church,”† it is probable that the policy developed was in full accord with his ideas. “If we mistake not,” declared Dr. James Dixon, a President of the British Wesleyan Conference, “it is to the American Methodist Episcopal Church that we are to look for the real mind and sentiments of this great man,” holding that it was “only a legitimate development” of the principle of Wesley’s ordinations. With this opinion other able British Wesleyans agreed.³⁰²

Neither Thomas Coke nor Francis Asbury had a genius for organization.

* In the *General Minutes* of 1789 a gesture of respect and reconciliation was made in a further revision—a twofold statement, as follows: “Quest. 1. *Who are the persons that exercise the Episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?* John Wesley, Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury—3. Quest. 2. *Who have been elected by the unanimous suffrages of the General Conference to superintend the Methodist connection in America?* Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury—2.” This form evidently was not satisfactory, for the next year the order was transposed and the words “the Methodist connection in America” were changed to “the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.” In the 1791 *General Minutes* Question 1, above, was omitted and John Wesley’s name disappeared permanently from the *Minutes*.—*Gen’l Minutes*, I, 32, 36, 40.

† It is held by some historians that Wesley neither intended nor anticipated the founding of a separate Church in America. (Cf. J. A. Faulkner, *Burning Questions in Historic Christianity*, [New York: Abingdon Press, 1930], ch. XIII; William Warren Sweet, *Methodism in American History*, pp. 102ff.) Support is lent to this view by reference in Wesley’s certificate of ordination of Thomas Coke to “many of the people in the Southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England. . . .” This reference would seem to be counterbalanced by the words quoted above from the other document. A third document was sent to America by Wesley at the hands of Coke, the contents of which are not known other than that it contained suggestions on what should be done.

Their interests and abilities concerned other things and for a number of years little organizational development occurred. The first constructive attempt to supplement the simple structural organization agreed upon at the Christmas Conference ended in a fiasco. At first Asbury—or when Coke was in the country the two Bishops—convened all the preachers of a given area annually in Conference.* These were really District Conferences since they included only the preachers of a limited area. For five years no attempt was made to assemble a general meeting of all the preachers. In the meantime they had increased in number from eighty-three to 196 and were scattered over the entire eastern and southern portions of the country, Upper and Lower Canada, and a large area west of the Alleghenies. In 1789 eleven Conferences were held. Any action of churchwide application taken in any one Conference was not binding unless sanctioned by all the Conferences—an extent of agreement scarcely to be expected. To meet the situation the Bishops proposed to the Conferences of 1789 the plan of a "Council" to be composed of the Bishops and Presiding Elders;† provided that "the members who form the Council be never fewer than nine. . . ." The Bishops were to have authority to summon the Council to meet "at such times and places as they shall judge expedient," and it was to be given wide powers including authority "to mature every thing they may see necessary for the good of the Church." After some debate and opposition a majority of the preachers agreed to the plan.‡ The first meeting was held at Baltimore, December 1, 1789, with Asbury and eleven Presiding Elders present. Asbury records that all the "business was done in love and unanimity."³⁰³ But the plan involved a degree of concentration of authority—for one thing Asbury was virtually given an absolute veto on all proposed legislation—that, as might have been foreseen, many of the preachers would never agree to. A second session was held in 1790, and a third

* The terminology used in the official records is confused. The first printed *Minutes* of the Conference held in 1786 bore the title "Minutes of the General Conference . . . 1786." So, also, with the *Minutes* for 1787. This same title was used in the *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually held in America from 1773 to 1794 inclusive* (Philadelphia: John Dickins, 1794). But in the later edition, *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences annually held in America from 1773 to 1813 inclusive* (New York: Hitt and Ware, 1813), the title of the 1786 Minutes was changed to read *Minutes taken at the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1786*. Cf. Nolan B. Harmon, *The Organization of the Methodist Church* (Abingdon-Cokesbury: 1948), pp. 98, 128.

† This is the first use of the term "presiding elder" in the official records of the Church. At the Christmas Conference, as previously noted, twelve preachers were elected and ordained elders. In order that the people might be supplied with the ordinances several Circuits were joined under the charge of an elder whose responsibility was to visit each Circuit quarterly and, in addition to preaching, hold Love Feasts and administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The term is used also in the *General Minutes* for 1789 (pp. 33-34), doubtless in conformity with the plan for the Council. In the *Discipline* it occurs first in 1792, and reappears in the *General Minutes* of 1797, being used regularly thereafter.

‡ Jesse Lee strenuously opposed the plan from the beginning. He saw clearly the dangers which it involved and addressed a letter to the Council at its first session, pointing out its weaknesses. Asbury returned a curt letter, in the name of the Council, containing a thinly veiled threat: "You are acquainted with the discipline of the Methodist Church: if you can quietly labor among us under our discipline and rules, we cheerfully retain you as our brother and fellow-laborer. . . ." But Lee was not to be cowed. Greatly to his credit, he took no offence at the undeserved, harsh rebuke and in July, 1791, wrote again to Asbury proposing a plan for a delegated General Conference which, resisted by Asbury for seventeen years, was finally adopted. (Cf. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, III, 15.) For the full minutes of both sessions of the Council, see Lee's *Short History of Methodism*, pp. 150-158.

was proposed for 1792. But in the meantime so widespread and intense opposition had arisen that it was not held. When the General Conference of 1792 met, Asbury—thoroughly sick of the whole matter—requested that the name of the Council might not be mentioned in the Conference.³⁰⁴

General Conferences were held in 1792, 1796, 1800, 1804, and 1808. For several years a growing restiveness and some outspoken complaint had been in evidence regarding the absolute power of the Bishops in stationing the preachers. The ferment of democracy was at work within Methodism. Of the preachers, the chief contender for change was James O'Kelly of Virginia, a man of commanding personality and more than average ability, but of irascible temper, strong prejudices, and overweening personal ambition. As a Presiding Elder for eight years in southern Virginia, one of the strongest Methodist centers in the whole country, he had been a rigid disciplinarian and had built up a large following among both preachers and laymen. On the second day of the General Conference of 1792 he introduced the following resolution:

After the bishop appoints the preachers at Conference to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the Conference, and state his objections; and if the Conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit.³⁰⁵

The resolution was debated for three days. It proposed a radical constitutional change and it "called forth all the strength of the preachers." It was defended, in addition to O'Kelly, by several of the most able and deeply respected ministers of the Church, including Hope Hull, Richard Ivey, and Freeborn Garrettson. Leading the opposition were Nelson Reed, Jesse Lee, Henry Willis, and Joseph Everett. Asbury absented himself from the sessions. Thomas Ware and Jesse Lee agree that had O'Kelly subordinated his personal ambitions, exhibited less rancor,* and emphasized more clearly the social principles involved, the proposal probably would have carried, for the end sought was favored by many. As it was, the resolution was defeated by a large majority.³⁰⁶ James O'Kelly left the Conference in high dudgeon, taking with him a number of the younger preachers—including William McKendree—and led a revolt, the first serious schism in organized American Methodism.† For several years the membership of the Church suffered severe

* At points the discussion was vitriolic. Hope Hull asked, "Did not our fathers bleed to free their sons from the British yoke and shall we be slaves to ecclesiastical oppression?" Another declared that those who submitted to such absolute dominion forfeited "all claims to freedom and ought to have their ears bored through with an awl, and to be fastened to their master's door and become slaves for life." (T. Ware, *op. cit.*, p. 221.) William McKendree referred to the power of the Bishop to appoint without right of appeal as "an insult to my understanding," and "such an arbitrary stretch of power, so tyrannical [or] despotic, that I cannot [or] will not submit to it."—Ezekiel Cooper, "Semicentennial Sermon."

† James O'Kelly (or O'Kelley), 1735–1826, who first appears in the list of Methodist appointments in 1779 as stationed on the New Hope (N. C.) Circuit, was one of the twelve ordained at the Christmas Conference of 1784 (Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 94f.). Following his withdrawal in 1792 he organized the Republican Methodist Church. In 1794 the group decided to be known simply "as Christians," and to take "the Bible itself" as their only creed. (Wilbur E. MacClenny, *Life of Rev. James O'Kelly*, [Raleigh, N. C., Edwards and Broughton, 1910] p. 116.) As a denomination they became the Christian

loss, according to some estimates as many as one-fifth of the total membership.³⁰⁷

Thus a second attempt to effect significant constitutional change was thwarted.* But the purpose to introduce a larger element of democracy into Church administration would not down. Expressed in various forms it came before the General Conferences of 1796, 1800, and 1808. In 1812, after protracted debate, it was defeated by a majority of only three votes.† In modified form it was again presented to the General Conference of 1816. After it had been before the Conference for a week and thoroughly debated, it was once more defeated, this time by a substantial majority.³⁰⁸ But this did not end effort for reform.‡

Meanwhile, Asbury's absolutism had been modified by McKendree, although as Bishop he was unalterably opposed to the elective presiding eldership. Asbury refused to take counsel with the Presiding Elders in making the appointments and strongly urged McKendree to follow his plan. McKendree, however, demurred saying: "I . . . refuse to take the *whole* responsibility upon myself, not that I am afraid of proper accountability, but because I conceive the proposition . . . highly improper." To McKendree is due the "cabinet" to which long continued usage has given almost the force of law.³⁰⁹

The General Conference of 1796 divided the Church into six Annual Conferences, empowering the Bishops to create others if necessary. At the General Conference of 1804, for the first time, a limitation was placed on the tenure of preachers, the rule then adopted providing that a Bishop should not allow any preacher to remain longer than two years on the same Circuit or Station.³¹⁰

Connection; later the Christian Church. It is only fair to record that the animadversions against O'Kelly, and allegations of heresy in early Methodist sources, lack historical validity. (Cf. H. N. McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, p. 412.) While his action in leading a secession was impetuous and ill-considered, he was undoubtedly sincere and no more a sinner than sinned against. For an objective estimate of O'Kelly's character and personality see M. H. Moore, *Sketches of the Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia*, pp. 290ff.

* While Asbury made repeated attempts to regain the favor of O'Kelly, apparently he was not able at any time to discern the real significance of the revolt, from first to last electing to treat it solely as a personal attack: "Some individuals among the preachers having their jealousies about my influence in the conference, I gave the matter wholly up to them, and to Dr. Coke, who presided. . . . I am happy in the consideration that I never stationed a preacher through enmity, or as a punishment. . . . I have no time to contend, having better work to do: if we lose some children, God will give us more. Ah! this is the mercy, the justice of some who, under God, owe their all to me, and my tyrants, so called. The Lord judge between them and me!" (*Op. cit.*, II, 172f., 189.) Asbury was successful in persuading McKendree to return to the Methodist fold.

† "The . . . proposition . . ." wrote J. Alfred Faulkner many years later, "was a modest and tentative attempt to infuse a slight popular tinge into the absolutist régime inherited from Wesley. It must be said, however, that American democracy has not been justified of her Methodist children."—W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds., *op. cit.*, II, 119.

‡ The O'Kelly schism and later efforts for reform, it should be noted, paralleled attempts made in England, following the death of Wesley for the introduction of more democratic government into the British Wesleyan Connexion. The first of these, under the leadership of Alexander Kilham, who in 1793 published the pamphlet *The Progress of Liberty Among the People Called Methodists*, resulted in 1797 in the organization of the Methodist New Connexion. This was followed by the secession of the Band Room Methodists, 1806; the Methodist Independents, 1806; the Methodist Unitarians, 1806; the Primitive Methodists, 1810; the Bible Christians, 1815; and the Association Methodists, 1834. In every instance dissatisfaction with the organization and government of the Church was a principal cause of dissension, particularly democratic rights and the demand of laymen to sit and vote in the Conference.—For general reference see George Smith, *Polity of Wesleyan Methodism* (London: 1851); Harold U. Faulkner, *Chartism and the Churches*, pp. 82ff.; W. J. Warner, *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 134.

At the General Conference of 1808 was taken the most important action—up to that time—since the Christmas Conference, the introduction of representative government. The constitution was drafted by Joshua Soule. In place of a General Conference composed of all the Traveling Preachers, it provided a delegated body of ministers made up of one member for every five members of each Annual Conference. Definite limitations, known as the restrictive rules, were placed upon the power of the General Conference :

1. The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing or established standards of doctrine. . . . 3. They shall not alter or change any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency. 4. They shall not revoke or change the General Rules of the United Societies . . . Provided, nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of all the Annual Conferences, then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions.

The constitution* as adopted was, without question, a compromise. It provided for representative government and for a supreme assembly whose powers were delegated, but it also fastened more firmly upon the Church the powers and privileges that had been assumed and exercised by previous Bishops: the Bishops were given a life tenure; they were not open to impeachment except for immorality; and they were virtually unanswerable to anyone other than themselves.³¹¹

The first delegated General Conference, composed of ninety delegates from eight Annual Conferences, met in the John Street Church, in New York, May 1, 1812.

* For the constitution, in full, as adopted, see the *Discipline* of 1808, pp. 14-16.

III

Sowers Go Abroad to Sow 1784-1819

THE CLOSING DECADE of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century constituted a period of unprecedented interest and activity in missionary expansion and formal organization. Between 1790 and 1830 strong and effective organizations for promotion of Protestant missions came into being in Great Britain and the United States. The new impulse for systematic, organized propagation of the faith was largely the outgrowth of Evangelicalism* in Great Britain, of the Great Awakening in the earlier part of the eighteenth century in the American colonies, and of the extensive revivals under Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregational leadership in the closing decades of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth century. A new spirit was abroad throughout Protestantism and, despite wars, a widespread and growing scepticism among some elements of the population, and the religious apathy of multitudes, it found expression in aggressive organized effort.

The first of these missionary organizations, which eventually became the Baptist Missionary Society, came into existence at Kettering, England, in 1792 as the direct result of the persistent effort of William Carey, who was later sent to India as one of its first missionaries.¹ Carey and the society which he called into being represent "the beginning of an astounding series of Protestant efforts to reach the entire world with the Christian message."² In 1795 was organized the London Missionary Society, in which it was hoped Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and others of the Free Churches, as well as adherents of the Church of England would combine their missionary effort.³ In 1799 the Church Missionary Society was founded by Evangelicals within the Church of England for missionary effort beyond the bounds of the British Empire.⁴

Meanwhile, increased zeal for organized missionary effort developed also

* "The London Missionary Society, like the other great religious and philanthropic organizations which sprang into existence at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, is a child of the evangelical revival in England originated by Whitefield and the Wesleys."—Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895* (London: Henry Froude, 1899), p. 3.

in the United States. In 1787 the American Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America, which had already been in existence for twenty-five years as a voluntary organization, was given legal status by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature. On November 1, 1796, a group of ministers and laymen of New York City formed the first voluntary interdenominational missionary society organized in the United States—the New York Missionary Society—for the purpose of “sending the gospel to the frontier settlements, and among the Indian tribes in the United States.”⁵ Represented in its membership were members of the Presbyterian, Associate Reformed, Reformed Dutch, and Baptist Churches. Its stated objective was the conversion of the Indians, and its first missions were established among the Chickasaws of Georgia and Tennessee.⁶

Numerous Congregational voluntary missionary societies were formed in New England preceding and following the turn of the century, the first being the Missionary Society of Connecticut,* organized June 21, 1798.⁷ During this same period there were also numerous organizational developments among the Presbyterians in the interest of missionary activity.† The General Assembly became a missionary society by incorporation by Pennsylvania state charter in 1799.⁸ In 1802 the Synod of Pittsburgh constituted itself the Western Missionary Society with the object of carrying “the Gospel to Indians and interim inhabitants,” and similarly the synods of Virginia, Kentucky, and the Carolinas operated as missionary societies.⁹ Among the Baptists the Massachusetts Missionary Society was launched in Boston in 1802; while in 1804 a society was formed in Maine, one in Philadelphia, and within the next few years numerous others.¹⁰

All of the United States' societies thus far named were concerned principally—if not wholly—with missionary activities within North America. Within a few years after the turn of the century a number of deeply religious students at Williams College formed a secret group, the “Society of the Brethren,”‡ whose purpose was “to effect in the persons of its members a mission or missions to the heathen.”¹¹ An outcome of their activities was the organization in 1810 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign

* The Missionary Society of Rhode Island was formed in 1801; the New Hampshire Missionary Society also in 1801; the Maine Missionary Society in 1807 (incorporated by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1809); and the Vermont Missionary Society—formed by the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers of Vermont resolving itself into a missionary society—likewise in 1807.

† “There are four descriptions of people to whom the Assembly, at present, are endeavoring to send missions. 1. To those who are settled on our frontier. . . . 2. To certain places in the more settled parts, where the gospel has not been regularly established. . . . 3. To the black people, or negroes of the United States. . . . The Assembly have for two years past, employed a missionary of their own race and colour to travel and labour among them. . . . 4. To the Indians, or Aborigines, of our country. . . . One . . . is now commissioned. . . .”—Letter of Ashbel Green, chairman, Standing Committee of Missions, *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, II, 1 (June, 1804), 13f.

‡ The Society of the Brethren was formally organized on Sept. 7, 1808. The chief reason for secrecy “was the indifferent and hostile attitude of a Church which could see in foreign missions only overheated religious zeal and fanaticism.”—Clarence P. Shedd, *Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements*, pp. 52f.

Missions¹² which in 1812 sent out its first group of foreign missionaries. In May, 1814, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions was organized.¹³

The societies whose beginnings we have recorded are by no means all that were organized within the period 1790–1820. Merely to list all of the nationally organized societies, together with all regional and local organizations, would require pages.¹⁴

The preceding chapter has traced the rise of American Methodism (1784–1819) under the impetus of its missionary motivation, with evidence that its expansion as a whole was an expression of the missionary spirit. Gradually, however, conviction was developed in the minds of some of the leaders of the Church, particularly in and about New York City—influenced no doubt by the organization of the many denominational and independent missionary societies—that Methodist missions would be aided by the formation of a society wholly devoted to the support and expansion of activities distinctively missionary. This conviction led to *the authorization by the General Conference of 1820 of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*.¹⁵ In reality, however, Methodist foreign missions date from the day of the Church's birth.*

MISSION TO NOVA SCOTIA

At the Christmas Conference, 1784, Freeborn Garrettson† and James O. Cromwell “were set apart especially for Nova Scotia” and Jeremiah Lambert “was ordained for the island of Antigua, in the West Indies.” This action has never had the attention in the history and literature of the Church that its importance deserves. Asbury himself did not dwell upon it. In the laconic manner characteristic of his *Journal* he merely remarked: “Twelve elders were elected, and solemnly set apart to serve our societies in the United States, one for Antigua, and two for Nova Scotia.”¹⁶ “Set apart” for service outside the bounds of the United States, Freeborn Garrettson and James O. Cromwell were the first foreign missionaries of American Methodism.¹⁷ Abel Stevens declares that in fact they “were the first foreign missionaries ever commissioned by the Protestantism of the New World.”¹⁸ Jeremiah Lambert, an honored minister “of sound judgment [and] clear understanding,” did not

* John Atkinson: “Though the new Church numbered only about eighty ministers, and its field at home was large and constantly extending, it ordained three preachers as missionaries to other lands. It had no missionary organization, no treasury filled with gold, but it was at its birth a missionary Church.”—*Centennial History of American Methodism*, p. 124.

† Garrettson was destined to play a prominent part in early American Methodism. Born in Maryland on Aug. 15, 1752, he was converted in his twenty-third year and within a year united with the Conference. Coke met him on Nov. 13, 1784, at Dover, Del., and was immediately impressed by his character, his personality, and his religious zeal. “He seems to be all meekness and love,” Coke wrote in his *Journal*, “and yet all activity. He makes me quite ashamed, for he invariably rises at four in the morning . . . and now blushing I brought my alarm to four o'clock.”—*Extracts of the Journals . . .*, p. 45.

reach Antigua, the mission field for which he was ordained, dying within a few months after his ordination.¹⁹

In the year 1772—twelve years before the Christmas Conference—a small party of immigrants from Yorkshire had arrived in Nova Scotia.* They were followed by others in the spring of 1773. Early in 1774 several boatloads arrived.²⁰ At this time almost one-fourth of the members of the Methodist Societies in the British Isles lived in Yorkshire. It is not therefore surprising that among the immigrants were numerous Methodists, godly people—farmers and others—who brought their religion with them across the ocean. One noteworthy family was that of William Black, Sr.—the parents, four sons, and one daughter—from Huddersfield, Yorkshire. They arrived in the spring of 1775. Four years later, in the course of a revival—held, apparently, without benefit of clergy—William, Jr., the second son, experienced a profound religious awakening and immediately became instrumental in the conversion of others.²¹ This revival marked the beginning of Methodism in the Dominion of Canada. Not only were meetings held; Classes also were organized which met regularly at private homes for prayer and testimony, as also monthly Love Feasts, and Quarterly Meetings, following the Wesleyan pattern with which the leaders had become familiar in England. In all of these activities, William Black, Jr., was foremost in association with three other young men. Together they formed a Circuit including Fort Lawrence, Prospect, and Amherst. Following his twenty-first birthday, in November, 1781, Black began to devote himself wholly to the itinerant ministry, traveling extensively among the scattered settlements of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.²²

An autobiographical sketch detailing his inner conflicts preceding his conversion, and his activities as a preacher from November 13, 1781, to February 1, 1785, gives evidence of Black's intense zeal. He journeyed from place to place over a wide area, in winter on snowshoes, in summer either walking or using a sailboat, at times preaching daily, and often suffering from exposure and extreme fatigue. The record for June 21-27, 1783, tells of his having preached ten times within one week. Coke, with whom he corresponded, remonstrated with him, writing on one occasion ". . . do not kill yourself. I am almost angry with you for shortening your useful life." In 1782 Black made an earnest appeal to the Conference in England to provide assistance by sending missionaries but there was a dearth of suitable candidates, and Wesley also was loathe to act so long as the Revolution continued.²³

* In 1604, the French made the first attempt at colonization of the region, naming it Acadia. Struggle between the French and the British for its permanent possession was waged until 1763 when by the Treaty of Paris France resigned all her claims. In 1749 Halifax had been founded and over four thousand English colonists had been sent out. New England had repeatedly fought for the region and beginning in 1759-60 extensive migration from New England occurred. The first provincial census (1767), an incomplete return, gave the total population as 13,374, of whom 6,913 were "Americans." (John B. Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1937], p. 95n; Marcus L. Hansen and J. B. Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940], I, ch. 2.

By 1776, following the withdrawal of the British army from Boston, more than a thousand "Loyalists"—British sympathizers—the first great migration, had made their way from New England to Halifax. After the surrender more than thirty thousand Loyalists from widely scattered areas gathered at New York and were transported to British territory—some twenty thousand to Nova Scotia, about twelve thousand to New Brunswick, other thousands to Lower and Upper Canada, and a lesser number to the West Indies and to England.²⁴

Among those who sought refuge in Nova Scotia were fifteen or twenty Methodists from Wesley Chapel (John Street Church) in New York, including John Mann—a layman who for some time during the war had been in charge of the church; and Charles White, a trustee and Class Leader.²⁵ Philip Marchinton, also a trustee of John Street, with his family, sailed from New York in his own vessel for Nova Scotia but the ship was driven by contrary winds to Bermuda and did not reach Halifax until the spring of 1784.

The influx of so large a number of new immigrants greatly increased the need for preachers. Some of the refugees added their appeal for missionaries to the importunities of Black and his converts, the fact that Methodism in its origin was British and Church of England commending it to their favor. Thomas Coke, ever alert to missionary opportunity and need, became deeply interested in their behalf and resolved "to render them assistance both from England and America."²⁶ Robert Barry, a faithful John Street member, wrote to Wesley, adding his plea. Hoping by personal representations to obtain help, in September, 1784, Black journeyed to the United States. At Abingdon, Maryland, he met Richard Whatcoat, and on December 14, Thomas Coke. With them, he attended the Christmas Conference, which deeply impressed him, inspiring him later to comment:

Perhaps such a number of godly men never before met in Maryland; perhaps not on the continent of America. Presiding over their deliberations, was a small man [Thomas Coke], of gigantic soul, a 'chieftain' in British Methodism, 'only second to Wesley himself.'²⁷

It was undoubtedly due to the insistence of Coke that the Christmas Conference took action establishing the Nova Scotia Mission. This assumption is supported by an entry in his *Journal* which says that on one of the weekdays at noon he made a collection for the assistance of the brethren who were going to Nova Scotia; "and our friends generously contributed fifty pounds currency (thirty pounds sterling)."²⁸ He also solicited funds outside of the Conference, collecting in one afternoon thirty pounds sterling in the city of Baltimore, and in New York and Philadelphia sixty pounds. A biographer of Coke, Samuel Drew, assigns almost exclusive credit to him for founding and maintaining the mission:

It was to him . . . that these northern settlers owed their obligations under God, for that assistance which they continued to receive, in the missionaries that were sent during their infancy, and in the means provided for their support; and which have ultimately led to the permanent establishment of the gospel in these distant and extensive regions.²⁹

About the middle of February, 1785, Garrettson and Cromwell took their departure and after a stormy voyage arrived safely in Nova Scotia.* They were cordially received at Halifax, where they landed.† Garrettson began his ministry at once, preaching in a house rented by Philip Marchinton at ten dollars per month, capable of accommodating three hundred worshippers. Within a month he started on a trip through the country, traveling three hundred miles through deep snow and preaching twenty times. He continued his labors with the same zeal "by which he had been distinguished in the United States, and many sinners were awakened and converted to God, and several societies formed."³⁰

In the spring of 1786 plans were made for the holding of a Conference the next fall. Coke sent word that he would arrive in Nova Scotia late in September or early in October with the additional missionaries, Hammet, Warrener, and Clarke, set apart by Wesley for Nova Scotia. He sailed on September 24 from Gravesend but by contrary winds his ship was driven to Antigua instead of Halifax—"and Coke never stepped on the shores of British North America."³¹ This was a misfortune for Nova Scotia. Not having firsthand acquaintance with the field Coke was thereafter not as sensitive to its needs as to those of the West Indies which he was consequently inclined to favor at Nova Scotia's expense.

The Halifax Conference nevertheless convened on October 10 and continued in session four days. Garrettson and Black were appointed to the Halifax Circuit, extending from Halifax to Digby; John Mann to Liverpool; Cromwell and James Mann to Shelburne and Barrington, and William Grandin‡ to Cumberland.³²

In the spring of 1787 Coke requested Garrettson to return to the United States to attend the Conference to be held in Baltimore. Both Coke and As-

* In the *General Minutes* for 1785 the Nova Scotia and Antigua appointments are included along with those for the United States. Under "Question 12. How are the preachers stationed this year?" there appears: "Shelburne, Freeborn Garrettson; Port Roseway, James O. Cromwell; Antigua, Jeremiah Lambert, John Baxter" (I, 23, 24). In 1786 only the general designation, Nova Scotia, appears in the following form: "Freeborn Garrettson and James O. Cromwell, *Elders*. Nova Scotia, William Black, John Mann." Members reported number: "Nova Scotia, 510."—I, 25, 26.

† The first missionaries to Nova Scotia were sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Church of England). Between 1763 and 1771 three Baptist preachers labored in the province, but the churches organized by them had disappeared before the outbreak of the Revolution. By 1770 Nova Scotia had nine ordained Congregational ministers but within five years thereafter more than half of the pulpits were vacant. Presbyterianism also was represented, principally among the Scotch-Irish settlers. Between 1749 and the outbreak of the Revolution ten Congregational, four Presbyterian, and four Baptist churches had been organized.—Maurice W. Armstrong, *The Great Awakening in Nova Scotia, 1776-1809*, pp. 34, 35, 47, 55, 58.

‡ T. W. Smith: "William Grandin, a young man, formerly of New Jersey, where he had become a Methodist, had also been called into the ministry, and sent to Cumberland."—*History of the Methodist Church . . . Eastern British America . . .* I, 179.

bury, at the instance of Wesley, had asked Garrettson that he allow himself to be "ordained Superintendent over the work in the British North American provinces, and in the West Indies." But he had demurred:

The Lord knows I am willing to do anything in my power for the furtherance of the Gospel; but as to confining myself to Nova Scotia, or any part of the world, I could not; a good God does not require it of me.³³

Did Coke communicate the content of this letter to Wesley? Or, did Garrettson write in similar vein to Wesley? We do not know, and can only speculate whether Wesley had this statement in mind when, under date of July 16, 1787, he wrote a letter to Garrettson in the course of which he said that Coke thought him irresolute, yet unwilling to take advice. "I hope better things of you, and your heart says to God and man, What I know not, teach thou me."³⁴ Whether as a result of Wesley's words or for other reasons, Garrettson receded from his position, writing in his *Journal*: "It was with reluctance I came into this province, but now I feel a willingness to labour and suffer in the cause of Christ among this people."³⁵

Conference at Baltimore convened on May 1, 1787. Garrettson, who had left Nova Scotia on April 10, was present and able to report four extensive Circuits, with six preachers and more than five hundred members. Coke made Wesley's wish (and his own) known to the body: that Garrettson should be made Superintendent of the Methodist work in the British dominions in America; and the action was "unanimously sanctioned." What subsequently occurred can best be told in Garrettson's own words, from his "semi-centennial sermon":

Dr. Coke, as Mr. Wesley's delegate and representative, asked me if I would accept of the appointment. I requested the liberty of deferring my answer until the next day. I think on the next day the doctor came to my room, and asked me if I had made up my mind to accept of my appointment: I told him I had upon certain conditions. I observed to him that I was willing to go on a tour, and visit those parts to which I was appointed for one year; and if there was a cordiality in the appointment with those whom I was requested to serve, I would return to the next conference and receive ordination for the office of superintendent. His reply was, 'I am perfectly satisfied,' and he gave me a recommendatory letter to the brethren in the West Indies, etc. I had intended, as soon as the conference rose, to pursue my voyage to the West India Islands, to visit Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, and in the spring to return. What transpired in the conference during my absence, I know not; but I was astonished, when the appointments were read, to hear my name mentioned to preside in the Peninsula.³⁶

Thus ended Garrettson's brief missionary tenure in the British dominion. Whatever the explanation of the drastic change in plan, the shift was a deep disappointment to Wesley and to many devoted friends in Nova Scotia. His former colleagues—William Black, James Mann, Alexander Anderson, and

others—for more than a year plied him with entreaties to return. Under the pressure he wavered. On September 10, 1787, he wrote to John Baxter, of Antigua:

I have been earnestly solicited by Dr. Coke and others to become a member of the British Conference in British America. I expect to meet Mr. Asbury in a few weeks, and know not but I shall be with you late in the fall. I want to act in that sphere in which I shall the most glorify my dear Lord. The cause of God lies near my heart: though my connections here are very near to me, yet at the call of my God I could cheerfully leave them. . . .³⁷

Finally, all idea of accepting the superintendency was abandoned—the following reasons being assigned: “(1) I was not acquainted with all the preachers, especially with those who were lately from England. (2) I felt unqualified for the charge. (3) It was not clear that I had a call to leave the United States.”³⁸

The third reason, together with the letter to Baxter, suggests that a probable factor in the case was a disinclination to transfer from the United States to British rule, and from the ministry of the newly organized Methodist Episcopal Church to the authority of Wesley. If he was to be ordained Superintendent over the work in the British provinces it would be necessary for him to confine himself wholly to those fields, and perhaps to expatriate himself—a thing which his guarded language suggests he was unwilling to do. On the other hand, it seems equally evident that Asbury and other colleagues were reluctant—if not unwilling—to part with a preacher who had proven to be of such great usefulness.³⁹

By all accounts Garrettson did a great work for the kingdom of God in Nova Scotia. His own summary of one phase of his ministry is interesting and revealing:

I traversed the mountains and valleys, frequently on foot, with my knapsack on my back, guided by Indian paths in the wilderness, when it was not expedient to take a horse; and I had often to wade through morasses half a leg deep in mud and water; frequently satisfying my hunger with a piece of bread and pork from my knapsack, quenching my thirst from a brook, and resting my weary limbs on the leaves of the trees. Thanks be to God; he compensated me for all my toil, for many precious souls were awakened and converted to God.⁴⁰

But this does not tell the whole story. He was a man of varied resources, a powerful preacher and capable organizer, of genuine piety and holiness of life, who left an abiding impression on the whole life of the province, “raising Methodism by his two years of ministry to a spiritual influence and a public credit in the province which it permanently retained.”⁴¹ Buckley’s statement that Garrettson’s influence in Nova Scotia “was almost equal to that of Wesley in Europe and Asbury in the United States” is, however, a gross exaggeration.⁴²

Two months after Garrettson's departure from Nova Scotia, Cromwell also returned to the United States. He lacked much of being the equal of Garrettson, but he was a devoted and useful minister. Physically he was unequal to the rigors of the severe climate and the exertions involved in the itinerancy. Within a few years after his return, in 1793 he "located" but lived for many years, says Abel Stevens, as "an humble, sweet-spirited old minister."⁴³

Why a substitute for Garrettson as Superintendent was not chosen and no other missionaries immediately sent out is not fully apparent but it was doubtless chiefly due to the fact that the number of preachers available was insufficient to meet the demands of the work near at hand.

Although no record to this effect appears in the Conference *Minutes*, at the Conference held at Baltimore the next year (1788) two preachers volunteered as missionaries to Nova Scotia, William Jessop and Woolman Hickson. The latter, a young man of great promise, had been instrumental in forming the first Methodist Class in Brooklyn.⁴⁴ Consumption had, however, marked him as its victim and Asbury refused to consent to his leaving for his distant field of service. His strength failed rapidly and in November he died. In June, Jessop arrived in Nova Scotia and took charge of the work at Shelburne to remain only until August, 1789, when he returned to the United States.

Disturbed that Coke and Asbury had failed to make provision for the supervision of the work in Nova Scotia, Wesley sent out James Wray as Superintendent, who arrived early in 1789. This did not prove to be a fortunate appointment. Although he had stood high in Wesley's esteem for some years, Wray failed to win the cooperation of the Nova Scotia preachers and within a few months requested Coke to relieve him of his responsibility by the appointment of another in his stead. In May, 1789, William Black and John and James Mann, seeking ordination, attended the Conference in Philadelphia. On the evening of May 19 Black was ordained deacon and on the following day an elder.⁴⁵ John and James Mann also were ordained at the hands of Coke and Asbury.⁴⁶ No record of their ordinations appears in the *Minutes*. Coke, accepting Wray's resignation, designated William Black as "Presiding Elder,"⁴⁷ an action apparently approved by Wesley, since the appointment appears in the British *Minutes* for 1790.

The continued close relationship of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Nova Scotia Methodism is indicated by several facts. That Black was designated as "Presiding Elder" clearly indicates that the appointment was made by Coke in his capacity as a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; moreover, "all Coke's letters to Black were addressed to him as 'Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia.'"⁴⁸ For one year (1791-92) James Mann returned to the United States to renew former associations and was given an appointment in the city of New York as a col-

league of Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Morrell. While again no mention is made of the fact in the *General Minutes* Thomas Whitehead went to Nova Scotia in 1790 from the New York Conference as a missionary, beginning a long and eminently useful ministry. In 1806 he transferred to Canada, where he became the "father" of the Canadian Conference,* and in 1824 the first president of the Canadian Missionary Society.⁴⁹

In the *General Minutes* for 1791 the Nova Scotia appointments reappear, with William Black as "Elder" and a list of seven stations and eight preachers—one station, St. John's, in New Brunswick.⁵⁰ Six of the eight preachers were new missionaries from the New York Conference, Freeborn Garrettson being this year Presiding Elder of the New York District. William Black attended the Conference and the appointments were made in response to his personal appeal.⁵¹ One of the six new recruits was William Jessop, who earlier had been in Nova Scotia for a few months.† He rendered valiant service, but within a few years his health failed and he returned to his native land to die. Of the other five none remained for long on the field.

The membership report for this year included 200 "blacks." Among the refugees who arrived in Nova Scotia in 1783 were a considerable group of fugitive Negroes, including many who had sought freedom by taking refuge with the British forces during the early years of the Revolution and others who had accompanied their white masters. The Methodist Societies at Shelburne, Halifax, Preston, and other places included Negro members, while that at Digby was almost wholly Negro. Garrettson, Cromwell, and other missionaries devoted much attention to evangelistic effort among them. Although during the intervening years all who were slaves had been emancipated, the colony did not prosper. To many the climate seemed too severe. When this year (1791) the Sierra Leone Company was incorporated by the British Parliament, a general desire to emigrate found expression and in January, 1792, 1,196—almost the entire colony—sailed from Halifax. Some years later, on arrival in Sierra Leone (1811) George Warren, the first Methodist missionary from England, found there two Methodist churches, three Local Preachers, and 102 members. Thus Negro Methodists from Nova Scotia made a significant contribution to the beginnings of the evangelization of Africa.⁵²

In 1792 Nova Scotia is not mentioned in the *General Minutes*, although this year three additional recruits were sent out:⁵³ Isaac Lunsford—"a judicious minister"; Benjamin Wilson of Virginia; and Daniel Fidler,‡ a man of gen-

* See p. 196.

† The other five were John Cooper, John Regan, William P. Early, James Boyd, and Benjamin Fisler.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 42.

‡ Daniel Fidler (1771–1842), a native of New Jersey, was admitted on trial in 1789, and traveled Circuits in the west and south until 1794 when he volunteered as a missionary to Nova Scotia. His service was highly esteemed by William Black who repeatedly urged him in 1797 and 1798 to remain in the province but he was constrained to return to the United States. (See letters, among the Fidler

uine missionary zeal, who remained for six years and rendered faithful service. In 1793, again, Nova Scotia is unmentioned but in 1794 the appointments reappear with eight preachers listed. Members reported are 1,100. No statement concerning Nova Scotia is made in 1795, but in the *General Minutes* for 1796, following the list of "stations," this note is printed, "N. B. Nova Scotia is left out of the *Minutes* this year." No reason is assigned. Again Black went to the United States appealing for help but "brought back from his visit . . . nothing but words of sympathy."⁵⁴

These were unsettled and difficult times for the British provinces in North America. In 1793 Great Britain had become embroiled in war with France. All the Nova Scotia ports were involved—their seafaring population demoralized by the privateering warfare—and it is not strange that the missionaries from the United States were affected by the prevailing turmoil.

In 1798 the Chairmen of the English Districts were instructed by the Conference to direct the attention of young preachers to needs overseas. Possibly encouraged by this action, in 1799 Black went to England where Coke lent his aid in the search for missionaries. In 1800 Black returned with four volunteers. Two of the four, William Bennett and Joshua Marsden, "were men of the true missionary stamp—steady, laborious, uncomplaining, ready for every hardship"—rendering long and valuable service.⁵⁵ This fruitful contact with the British Conference turned the attention of the Methodist Societies in Nova Scotia permanently toward the British Connexion.

The analysis of this development made by Findlay and Holdsworth seems reasonable:

By the end of the century it was evident that for the British colonies the help of American Methodism was vain. The men who came across the border felt themselves aliens—they could not take the oath of allegiance to the British crown, and at times were liable to suspicion on political grounds. Bishop Asbury complained that Nova Scotia 'spoiled' his young men—certainly he appeared to grudge sending them; in truth the work on his hands within the borders of the Republic left him none to spare. The experiment of union with the Methodism of the United States failed chiefly for this reason. Nova Scotia was compelled to turn her eyes elsewhere, and in 1799 Black crossed the Atlantic to seek aid from the mother country. By this date eleven Circuits had been formed in the two provinces [Nova Scotia and New Brunswick] . . . and but seven Preachers to man them.⁵⁶

At one point the above paragraph does not do full justice to the prevailing situation. Many of the refugees, "United Empire Loyalists," as they described themselves, remained unreconciled to the victory of the American Revolutionaries and were sharply critical of the young preachers who, despite the fact that they had come into a British province, did not hesitate to give expression

Papers in Drew University Library.) Following his return he was appointed in 1799 to Wilmington, Del. For thirty years he continued in the active ministry. Because of failing health, in 1830 he was granted the supernumerary relation. For obituary, see *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 356.

to their loyalty to their government. Again, although many of the older colonists from England had no love for the Establishment, the Loyalists were strongly inclined to favor it while the missionaries were wholly devoted to the newly organized Methodist Episcopal Church. Adding to the complication, Wesley expressed sympathy with the Anglican party. These political and religious divisions, together with the pretensions and intolerance of certain members of the Anglican clergy, made for uneasiness and dissatisfaction and shortened the period of service of a number of the missionary recruits.

By 1799 all but two of the missionaries from the United States had departed. Of these two, one settled a year or two later in New Brunswick and the other was dismissed from the ministry. *This year, therefore, may be said to mark the end of the mission to Nova Scotia.* Although four Nova Scotia preachers went to the New York Conference in 1802 to receive ordination at the hands of Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat,⁵⁷ and another—Stephen Bamford—in 1810 to the New England Conference for the same purpose, no more American missionaries were sent. The membership of the Nova Scotia Societies in 1799, it is estimated, numbered 850, and adherents approximately 3,000. The paucity of preachers and the brevity and uncertainty of their stay operated against permanent growth, with the result that the full possibilities of increase were at no time realized during the fifteen years of the mission's continuance.

UPPER AND LOWER CANADA MISSIONS

By the Peace of Paris of 1763, officially marking the close of the Seven Years' War, the whole of French North America extending as far west as the Mississippi and south to the Ohio River had been ceded to Great Britain. Across the Canadian border during and immediately following the War of Independence British Loyalists fled in large numbers. For more than two decades following the peace, heavy migration continued, no longer merely Loyalists but chiefly pioneer farmers seeking better agricultural land than New England offered.⁵⁸ In 1791 the British Parliament passed the "Constitutional Act," separating Canada into two parts—Lower Canada (now Quebec), chiefly French, and Upper Canada (now Ontario), making the Ottawa River the dividing line.⁵⁹ In the entire province of Upper Canada, a region of 700 miles from south to north and 1,000 miles from east to west there were at this time but three Anglican clergymen, one Scotch Presbyterian, and one or two Lutheran ministers of "Dutch" (German) congregations.

It is of interest to note that organized Methodism in Upper Canada dates from the year in which it was constituted a colonial province. However, for a number of years preceding formal organization, Methodist testimony had been faithfully borne in several widely scattered settlements—in one case by a little

group formerly associated with the founding of Wesley Chapel in New York City, of which members of the Embury family were members. In 1773 Philip Embury had died⁶⁰ and his widow, Margaret,* had married John Lawrence.⁶¹ She emigrated to Canada in company with her husband, her son Samuel, and Paul and Barbara Heck. Halting for a time at Montreal the group made their way westward, finally in 1785 locating permanently in the township of Augusta where they became the nucleus of a Methodist Class of which Samuel Embury was made Leader. Until her death in 1804, Barbara Heck, as years before in New York, was the leading spirit of the group.†

Another Methodist Class, possibly the first in order of time, was formed by Christian Warner in a settlement near Niagara Falls.⁶² The British Government allotted free lands in Canada to Loyalists and discharged soldiers on condition of actual settlement—at first, 5,000 acres to field officers, 3,000 to captains, 2,000 to subalterns, 200 to non-commissioned officers, and 50 to privates, later reduced in amount.⁶³ One of the many recipients was Major George Neal, of American birth, whose allotment was near Niagara. He was a Methodist Local Preacher, full of zeal and good works, who through his valiant testimony for Christ soon won a number of converts—among them, Christian Warner. Major Neal was ordained deacon by Francis Asbury at the first session of the Genesee Conference and lived to be one of the patriarchs of Canadian Methodism, dying in 1840 universally beloved.⁶⁴

At Adolphustown, in the Bay of Quinte country, near the headwaters of the St. Lawrence, James Lyons—a schoolmaster and Methodist Exhorter—settled in 1788. In out-of-school hours he visited the homes of his pupils, gathering the members of the families together for prayer and religious testimony. Crossing the border in the same year was a convert of George Whitefield—James M'Carty, a warm-hearted Irish American, who allied himself with Lyons. The intensity of his zeal kindled the enmity of some Kingston residents who had no taste for Methodist preaching and considered his unlicensed activities an affront to the Anglican Church. They conspired against him and finally succeeded by treachery in making way with him.⁶⁵ But the seed which he had sown, in association with Lyons, was destined to bear fruit.

The missionary labors of Freeborn Garrettson in Nova Scotia had created in him an abiding interest in the whole of Canada. In 1789, as Presiding Elder of the New York District, he commissioned one of his young preachers—William Losee, admitted this year to Conference on trial, and according to the

* Abel Stevens, *The Centenary of American Methodism* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1865), p. 66, erroneously refers to her as *Mary Switzer*.

† "In the old Blue Church burying-ground between Prescott and Maitland on the St. Lawrence may be seen the graves of Paul and Barbara Heck." (Mrs. Frederick C. Stephenson, *One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions, 1824-1924* [Toronto: Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1925], p. 37.) The burying ground is located "on Lot 15 in 1st. concession of the Township of Augusta, County of Greenville, Canada, West."—Inscription on pencil sketch made by W. Sherwood, Esq., lawyer, Brockville, July 9, 1866.

*General Minutes*⁶⁶ assigned along with David Kendall to the Lake Champlain Circuit—"to range at large in Canada," exploring possibilities for a Methodist mission. The commission was much to his liking. He was about twenty-seven years of age, full of vigor and enthusiasm, and though crippled by a withered arm was a bold and skillful horseman. He was an ardent evangelist, strong and passionate in denunciation of sin, with an arresting style of address.

Crossing the St. Lawrence at St. Regis in January, 1790,* Losee soon made contact with the little groups at Adolphustown (where he had relatives) and at Kingston, and within a few months awakened the interest of many others. In the summer he returned to the New York Conference bearing with him a petition for a regular missionary. Losee himself volunteered for the service, and was designated to undertake the mission, although his name does not appear in the list of appointments for that year. Making his way through the virgin forest of northeast New York State he crossed the St. Lawrence at Kingston and established headquarters at Adolphustown, preaching the first sermon of his appointed mission on Sunday, February 20, 1791, in the house of Paul Huff at Hay Bay, two miles distant—where already was a Methodist Class.† Within two weeks two more Classes were formed—so well had the ground been prepared by Lyons and M'Carty.⁶⁷ Reporting *in absentia* to the New York Conference of 1791, Losee was elected to deacon's orders, admitted into full connection, and listed in the *Minutes* as stationed at Kingston. Thus began the mission to Upper Canada.

The next year (1792) Losee appeared at the New York Conference, meeting in Albany, with an appeal for assistance. He was able to report 165 members "in Society" on his Circuit, which ranged over six townships. In response to his appeal, Darius Dunham volunteered and was appointed to the Cataraqui Circuit—Cataraqui being the old Indian name for the Kingston fort. Being an ordained elder, Dunham was qualified to administer the sacraments—of which many of the people in the Canadian wilderness had been deprived. He had been educated as a physician, but had turned to the ministry—having been received on trial in 1788. He was of small stature, energetic in body, resolute in will, tenacious in his opinions; "a man of strength, in mind and body; no such voice as his had before resounded through Canadian forests."⁶⁸ On September 15 he convened a Quarterly Meeting in James Parrot's barn, Ernestown, and on the following day—Sunday—with people gathered from a wide area, administered the Lord's Supper, the first by a Methodist minister in Upper Canada⁶⁹ and a "memorable 'beginning of days' for Canadian Methodism."

* This date on the authority of George F. Playter, *The History of Methodism in Canada*, p. 21n. Nathan Bangs is mistaken in saying (*History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 322) 1791.

† This Class became the nucleus of what was probably the first organized Methodist church in the Canadas. (See p. 179.) The building was erected in 1792 and still stands. It is now held under a Conference Trust as a shrine, and an annual commemorative service is held.

By the early nineties there were in Upper Canada some twenty to twenty-five thousand people* industriously engaged "in hewing out new homes."⁷⁰ For the most part they were of English origin, although among them were Scots, Irish, Germans, and some of other races. A large proportion of the refugees were from the state of New York, although there were many also from New England, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, with some from Virginia, North Carolina, and other regions.

The land was heavily forested with oak, beech, maple, and other hardwoods, interspersed with huge hemlocks and firs. Even now to skilled axmen with sharp blades and mechanical stump-pullers clearing is a stubborn process. The government, with the land grants, had supplied a meagre equipment of tools, but the axes had such short handles that they were not suitable for felling timber and there were no grindstones, no heavy saws or sawmills, and few plows—though plenty of hoes and mattocks. Hand gristmills were included for grinding wheat and corn, although in insufficient number, so that many families had to pound their grain between stones. Only a few cows were supplied. It was years before power sawmills were within reach of most of the settlers and then there were not enough teams of oxen or horses to haul the logs to the mills and the sawn lumber away from them. Only river transport was available for bringing in supplies—up the St. Lawrence from Montreal, with several rapids necessitating unloading and portaging cargoes through the forests to smooth water. Except those immediately adjacent to the old French trading posts at Kingston, Niagara, and Detroit, homes of the settlers were far apart—since each had been established on its own tract of land. There were no roads, only trails blazed through the forests. Sheep were gradually brought in, but protecting them from the wolves and bears proved difficult. Hand looms and spinning wheels had been fashioned against the day when wool, flax, and hemp would be available, and gradually homespun linsley-woolsey replaced the buckskin which during the earlier days had been the chief resource for trousers, smocks, and petticoats.

Bryce declares that probably a more indigent class of dependents was never "left upon the hands of a government."⁷¹ But the settlers were a hardy, diligent, and determined people and the land proved to be fertile beyond expectation, producing not only wheat, rye, and oats in abundant yield but also corn, grapes, apples, peaches, and melons plentifully. Despite their poverty during the first years and the many hardships imposed by primitive conditions, they made rapid progress in improving their lot.

To Losee in 1792 was assigned the opening up of a second Circuit desig-

* Estimates of the number vary widely. Bryce, for example, places the figure much lower: "Some ten thousand refugees had in 1784, and the few years following, found homes in Western Canada, just as . . . twenty thousand had settled in the provinces by the sea."—*A Short History of the Canadian People*, p. 215.

nated in the *General Minutes*, Oswegotchie,⁷² along the St. Lawrence River eastward sixty or seventy miles—a region chiefly of Scotch and German settlers. Neither Losee nor Dunham attended the 1793 Annual Conference but members were reported: Cataraqui, 259; Oswegotchie, 90. No appointments for Canada were this year listed in the *General Minutes*, perhaps accounted for by the absence of the preachers from the session. In the meantime two Methodist chapels were built—the first in Canada—one at Hay Bay, the other at Ernestown. The original subscription paper for the Hay Bay Meeting House has been preserved and is of special interest as suggesting the possibility in the minds of the subscribers of the sending of preachers from Great Britain. The paper, dated Adolphustown, February 3, 1792, reads (in part) as follows:

Dear friends and brethren,—As Almighty God has been pleased to visit us in this wilderness land with the light of a preached Gospel, we think it requisite to build a Meeting-house or Church for the more convenient assembling of ourselves together for social worship before the Lord.

We do agree to build said church under the direction of William Losee, Methodist preacher, our brother who has laboured with us this twelve months past, he following the directions of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or in his absence under the direction of any assistant Preacher belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church in Great Britain or America, sent from there by proper authority (such as the Bishop) to labour among us. . . .⁷³

To this paper were signed the names of twenty-one men and one woman, the subscriptions ranging from one to fifteen pounds, 10 shillings, Halifax currency. The total was 108 pounds, no small sum for a little group of pioneer settlers. The two buildings were of the same size, "thirty-six by thirty feet, two stories high with a gallery in the upper story." One of the donors to the building fund of the Ernestown church—Robert Clark, a carpenter—left a record of payments, crediting himself with working twenty-five days on the building at 5s. 6d. per day. His subscription was ten pounds. Seeing the building fund insufficient to meet the full cost, he reduced his charge for labor to 2s. 9d. per day. As soon as the buildings were enclosed, they were opened for use. At first "the people sat upon boards, and for a long time after." Soon the first Circuit had among its members four Exhorters, one of whom—Matthew Steel—when he began did not know the alphabet, "but he afterwards went to school, and soon could read a text and a hymn."⁷⁴

Beginning in 1794 Darius Dunham served for four years as Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District; in 1799 he was stationed on the Oswegotchie Circuit; and in 1800, because of "family concerns," was located, and on the Bay of Quinte resumed the practice of medicine, continuing frequently to preach in local pulpits. The name of William Losee in 1794 disappears from the *Minutes*, never to appear again. Playter records that disappoint-

ment in love "overset the mental balance of the first itinerant missionary to Canada."⁷⁵ "It is not certain," says Abel Stevens, "that his shaken intellect ever recovered its balance . . . [but many years later] . . . enjoying a comfortable, though infirm old age [he] died in peace. . . ." ⁷⁶

Two excellent missionaries, Elijah Woolsey and James Coleman, went from the New York District in 1794 to take Losee's place.⁷⁷

Woolsey was a genial and fervent man—so popular with the people that when the time came for him to leave the "upper Circuit" (Oswegotchie) they "were so afraid that they should be left without preaching . . . that they offered their lands. One and another offered fifty acres, and so on, according to their abilities. I told them I did not come after their lands, but that they might depend on having preaching notwithstanding my removal."⁷⁸

Coleman's pioneer labors are described as "such as fell to the lot of but few, even of the itinerants of that day." He wrought on the Canadian frontier till 1800.*

Economically these were lean years—particularly 1793-94—when many new settlers had to subsist on nuts, leeks, greens, and the bark of trees, and hundreds "barely escaped starvation."⁷⁹ Wolves were a pest, ever on watch for a stray sheep. Racoons, squirrels, and bears frequently destroyed the grain before it was ready for harvest, but it was usually possible to bag wild turkey and partridge and in season to shoot ducks on ponds and lakes.

The fifth missionary to volunteer (1795) for service in Upper Canada was Sylvanus Keeler, a young man, "who proved a good and faithful minister of Christ." He was an uneducated man but his natural ability, presence, voice, manners, and "boundless zeal" made him exceptionally valuable. He had a family of small children so that after one year's service on the Bay of Quinte Circuit it was necessary for him to locate temporarily, resuming his ministry in 1799. During about twelve years of itinerating on various Circuits he was often three months absent from his wife and children. After his final location he continued to preach "all his days" becoming "a patriarch among the societies, his hair 'woolwhite, long, flowing down upon his shoulders; his voice deep, yet soft as the roll of thunders in the distance'." Writing in 1867, Abel Stevens says "His name is still like 'ointment poured forth,' in all the region from the St. Lawrence to the settlements beyond the [Mississippi] river."⁸⁰

Ill health necessitated Woolsey's withdrawal in 1796 from the severe northern climate to the states, where he was able to continue in the itinerancy until 1838. He then superannuated, living until 1850, venerated and beloved—a

* James Coleman, a native of New Jersey, was admitted on trial in 1791, and was appointed to the "Redstone country." (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 39, 42.) He is described by Nathan Bangs as a man of "small stature, piercing bleak eyes . . . [and] an intelligent countenance; a good devoted man." (Quoted by Abel Stevens, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs*, p. 41.) Returning from Canada in 1800, he continued to serve for years in New England, an energetic and successful pastor.

veritable St. John among the churches. To reenforce the depleted ranks, this year (1796) "two new missionaries came into Canada"⁸¹—each of whom exerted far-reaching influence on the Canadian Church—Hezekiah Calvin Wooster and Samuel Coate, the first assigned to the Oswegotchie Circuit, the second to the Bay of Quinte. Wooster was a man with whom religion "was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," much given to prayer, of such fervency of spirit and of bold appeal to the conscience that few of "the wicked . . . could stand before him—they would either flee from the house or, smitten with conviction, fall down and cry aloud for mercy." On one occasion a man in the front gallery began

to swear profanely, and otherwise to disturb the congregation. The preacher . . . suddenly stopping . . . fixed his piercing eye upon the profane man, then stamping with his foot, and pointing his finger at him, with great energy, he cried out, '*My God! smite him!*' He instantly fell, as if shot through the heart with a bullet."⁸²

Playter, who thirty-seven years later traveled through the same townships as Wooster,* heard many incidents illustrative of his deep piety and zeal—so "vividly do strange and great acts live in the memories of the people."⁸³

Far different was the career of Samuel Coate. He was "a cultivated orator—graceful, discursive, instructive, and subduing in appeal, courtly, moreover, in manners, and studious of his dress and appearance"⁸⁴—an extraordinary man for that day and region:

He swept like a meteor over the land, and spellbound the astonished gaze of the wondering new settlers. Nor was it astonishment alone he excited. He was the heaven-anointed and successful instrument of the conversion of hundreds. His success in the early part of his career, was truly Whitefieldian.⁸⁵

His wife, a niece of Philip Embury, "was like Abigail, 'of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance.' When the husband and wife were together they were called the handsomest pair in Canada."⁸⁶ He had in his later years a checkered and sad career.†

The years 1797–99 show no significant development.‡ In the latter year there were still but three Circuits, supplied by four preachers. Members "in

* Hezekiah Calvin Wooster (1771–1798), who was not constitutionally strong, became a victim of consumption and in June, 1798, went home to die at twenty-seven years of age.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 85.

† Coate returned to the United States in 1800; was reappointed to Canada as Presiding Elder of the Upper and Lower Canada District in 1804; was made Presiding Elder of the Lower Canada District and pastor in Montreal in 1806; the next year, while still Presiding Elder, was stationed in Quebec; located by the New York Conference in 1810; accepted an offer in the Church of England and for a brief time "was settled over a congregation"; became a merchant in Montreal and failed in business (cf. Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . III, 197); and "spent his last days in England hawking about specimens of his fine penmanship [and engraving] for a livelihood ["he could write the Lord's Prayer with microscopic fineness on an English sixpence"] and died, in a condition of pitiable want, but with a penitent hope of God's mercy."—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 371.

‡ Canadian appointments are missing from the *General Minutes* of 1797. In 1798, Michael Coate, brother of Samuel, "came . . . by his brother's request" from a Connecticut Circuit to Canada. He remained but one year. In 1799 Joseph Jewell was sent as Presiding Elder, "the finest singer ever heard in the Province."

Society" were reported as 866—an increase of only 517 members in the six years since Losee and Dunham had sent in their reports. This reflects the fact that the Methodist missionaries—as also Baptist and Presbyterian ministers from the States—labored under serious disabilities. By some historians Losee is said to have been a Loyalist but it is certain that others who followed him were not.

As was inevitable bitter hostility had developed during the war between the "United Empire Loyalists" and the Revolutionaries, an attitude which on both sides continued for many years. The Loyalists regarded the Republicans as "vulgar nobodies . . . knaves and stupid fools, who [had] rebelled against their sovereign,"⁸⁷ while to those who were for independence a colonial soldier of King George was regarded as a traitor to his country and non-combatant Loyalists but little better. Washington had denounced them as not fit to live, and Governor Clinton of New York had declared that he would rather roast in hell than show mercy to a Loyalist.⁸⁸ The enduring hostility of the Loyalist refugees did not make for an easy lot for missionaries from the new Republic, much as the need for a religious ministry was felt by many. Besides, only the Anglican clergy were permitted to perform the marriage ceremony, which placed all Protestant ministers at a disadvantage.

Notwithstanding, in 1800 more rapid expansion began. Six itinerants received Canadian appointments this year,⁸⁹ including Joseph Sawyer—a man of ardent zeal and solidity of character and achievement who was to remain in Canada for years and whose labors were to have far-reaching influence on the Methodism of both Canada and the United States. Daniel Pickett was assigned the task of opening up a new Circuit—designated at first Grand River but later named Ottawa—among the immigrants who had established homes along the Ottawa River. On the Niagara Circuit a church was built, the third in Upper Canada, known as Warner's Meeting House, the congregation having outgrown the capacity of Christian Warner's dwelling. Sylvanus Keeler who had been in Canada in 1795 returned this year. In 1801 the missionary staff was increased to ten and the number of Circuits to five. The additional Circuit is listed in the *Minutes* as "Upper Canada" with the Presiding Elder, Joseph Jewell, and Samuel Draper assigned to it as preachers.⁹⁰ What is meant by this designation, says Playter, "is not easily perceived; unless it was that they should preach all over the country in places not included in circuits."⁹¹ And this apparently is what was done. The Circuit Riders went everywhere preaching the Gospel: in school-houses, in barns, in new settlers' cabins. Wherever they went they were freely offered a preaching place and a night's lodging while couriers were sent out far and wide heralding their coming and announcing the time and place of preaching. Results were soon apparent. The *Minutes* for 1802

report 1,502 members, a larger increase in three years than in the preceding six.⁹²

Conditions of travel were difficult and the Circuits long, requiring extensive and exhausting journeys. From one appointment to the next often necessitated following scantily marked wilderness trails from twenty to sixty miles; not infrequently encamping in the woods or sleeping in Indian huts; and at trail's end eating, lodging, and conducting the preaching service in one and the same room—"the curling smoke ascending through an opening in the roof of the log-house, which had not yet the convenience of even a chimney." Six weeks were required to make the round of the Niagara Circuit, with daily preaching. Thomas Madden, who began his missionary service in Canada in 1802, at twenty-two years of age, travelled a Circuit 350 miles long, "preaching thirty sermons a month." His ministry continued for thirty-one years, ending—in the words of the Canada *Minutes*—"in Christian triumph." The labors of the Presiding Elder were if anything even more exhausting; Circuits on a District were long. Henry Ryan was first appointed to Upper Canada District in 1810. His family lived on a small farm on the Niagara Circuit. The outgoing trip, with Quarterly Meetings on nine Circuits, required five weeks.

Now he turns homeward; and a journey from Cornwall to Niagara, on horseback, with the crooked, hilly, unmended, swampy roads . . . was no light undertaking. The distance was about 350 miles, and would require an industrious travel of five or six days. He would have a week to rest. Then he must again be on the road. . . . How little of his society would his family enjoy!⁹³

In 1801 began the ministry of Nathan Bangs. Born in Connecticut in 1778, he had gone in 1799—in his twenty-first year—as a schoolteacher and surveyor to Upper Canada. Through friendship with Christian Warner and James Coleman he came under strong religious influence. He heard Joseph Sawyer preach, who, he said, "unfolded all the enigmas of my heart more fully than I could myself. . . . I resolved to devote myself to God, come what might." Returning again and again to the settlement, Sawyer earnestly exhorted him to go forth and preach. In August, 1801, "about one year after he had joined the Church, and three months after he had been licensed as an exhorter, he received license to preach, and immediately departed for a circuit. . . . [He took, he says] no further thought 'what I should eat, or drink, or wherewithal I should be clothed.'"⁹⁴ He began his preaching on the Niagara Circuit and before the end of the year had so expanded it that a new Circuit was formed, the membership having been increased from 320 to 620. In June, 1802, though not present, he was received on probation in the New York Conference and assigned, with two other preachers, to the Bay of Quinte Circuit.⁹⁵ Two years later, 1804, he attended Conference and

was ordained deacon by Asbury. He mentioned to the venerable Bishop of having received a letter describing the moral and spiritual destitution in the scattered settlements along the Thames River. Asbury's response was: "you shall go, my son." When the appointments were read Bangs found himself assigned to the Thames region (in the *Minutes* mistakenly designated "River Le French,"⁹⁶) an area so subject to fever and ague, because of its many stagnant swamps, that the Presiding Elder had objected to his going there. His own account, written some fifty years later, reads:

This year . . . Nathan Bangs solicited and obtained the appointment of a missionary to a new settlement on the River Thames, in Upper Canada. This place had long been on his mind as a promising field for missionary labor, and he had frequently offered himself to explore it in the name of the Lord, but his presiding elder objected, on account of the feeble state of his health and the unhealthiness of the climate.⁹⁷

On August 9, fifty-four days after leaving the New York Conference, by traveling on horseback 600 miles, with numerous preaching engagements *en route*, Bangs reached his new Circuit. He was "the first Methodist preacher on the Thames, the St. Clair, and the northwestern shore of Lake Erie."⁹⁸ Three times he crossed over to Detroit but "no one appearing to take any interest in hearing the gospel preached there our missionary shook off the dust of his feet as a testimony against them, and took his departure from them." Elsewhere, the people everywhere "flocked together to hear the word." After three months of fruitful ministry, having contracted malaria, he left for the Niagara Circuit "intending to return soon, but was prevented."⁹⁹ He continued in missionary service until 1808.*

In the year 1805 two men who were to have a significant part in the development of Canadian Methodism, William Case and Henry Ryan, were sent to Canada by the New York Conference and appointed to "Bay Quinte." "This first year," says William Case in his "Journal," "I travelled about 2,500 miles, [and] preached more than 360 times. . . ." Case and Ryan had been familiar with the successful use of Camp Meetings in the United States and soon after their arrival, with the cooperation of other preachers, held a four-day Camp Meeting on the Hay Bay shore near the Adolphustown Chapel. The attendance "scarcely exceeded a hundred persons at any one service, excepting Sunday" but it effectively introduced a new evangelistic agency and "kindled a revival that spread through the district and far beyond."¹⁰⁰

About this time Lower Canada came prominently into the picture of

* During 1805 Bangs was on the Oswegotchie Circuit; in 1806 he volunteered for Quebec but receiving little support and being under heavy expense—he had been married on April 27 to Mary Bolton of Edwardsburgh—he soon transferred to Montreal; in 1807 was back on the Niagara Circuit; and in 1808, leaving Canada, he was appointed senior preacher on the Delaware Circuit, Albany District, New York Conference. In 1812 he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Lower Canada District and pastor at Montreal but the outbreak of the War of 1812 prevented his crossing the border and he never returned to Canada.

Methodist missionary activities as a District of the New York Conference. The Grand River Circuit (later Ottawa Circuit) established in 1800 appears the first year to have had three appointments, one of which was on the north side of the Ottawa River in Lower Canada. In 1802 Joseph Sawyer made an expedition down the St. Lawrence from Niagara and formed a Society of seven members in Montreal. In 1803, three appointments appear in the *General Minutes*.^{*} The next year (1804) the two Districts are listed together with only two Lower Canada appointments—"Ottawha" and Montreal.[†] In 1805 Montreal is omitted, but in the *Minutes* for 1806 Lower Canada appears as a separate District with Montreal restored and Quebec added as a third station; listing also William Snyder as "missionary to the French."¹⁰¹ In 1809 Three Rivers—one of the oldest settlements in Canada, and earlier a principal center of the fur trade—was added as a fourth station; and the next year the St. Francis River Circuit.¹⁰² In this form the District was continued until 1812 when it was transferred to the Genesee Conference.

For Methodism, Lower Canada was no such fertile field as Upper Canada. For one thing, many fewer Loyalists from the States had found refuge in French Canada. It was a closely knit society, holding with tense loyalty to the language, the laws, and the Catholic traditions of France. Nathan Bangs, possessing a type of temperament not easily discouraged, decided after brief trial that there was small hope of gaining a foothold in Quebec:

The majority of the people in Quebec were French Roman Catholics, bigotedly attached to all their peculiarities, and, of course, opposed to all Protestant innovations. The next in number . . . were the members of the Church of England, and next to them the Church of Scotland, all manifesting a deadly opposition to Methodism. . . . He has frequently held a prayer meeting with only one besides himself . . . though inwardly conscious of the divine approbation, yet with but faint hopes of success.¹⁰³

The opposition of the Roman Catholic priests also was formidable. William Snyder, who was able to preach in the French language, was cordially received by many people in the settlement to which he was assigned but the priest—particularly in the absence of the missionary—circulated such threats and so wrought upon the fears of the public that "not a soul dared to hear him or receive him into his house."¹⁰⁴

Notwithstanding difficulties the Methodists persisted. They were imbued with a sense of responsibility for ministry to the trickling stream of immigrants from the States and from England, to the soldiers in the British garisons among whom always there were some who had been brought up as Methodists, and to members of Methodist Societies from the Maritime Prov-

^{*} New York Conference, Pittsfield District: Montreal, Samuel Merwin; St. John's and Soreille, Elijah Chichester, Laban Clark, missionaries; Ottawa, Daniel Pickett.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 113.

[†] Upper and Lower Canada District, Samuel Coate, P. Elder; Ottawa, Samuel Howe; Montreal, Martin Ruter.—*Ibid.*, p. 121.

inces and from Upper Canada—a few of whom each year transferred their residences to Lower Canada, particularly to Quebec and Montreal.

In 1810, as previously noted, the Genesee Conference was set off from the widely extended New York Conference. Of its three Districts, Upper Canada was one—Lower Canada remaining as a part of the New York Conference.¹⁰⁵ The population of Upper Canada had by this time increased to 80,000; that of Lower Canada to about 220,000. The Upper Canada District, of which this year Henry Ryan was made Presiding Elder, had ten Circuits reporting 2,603 members; the Lower Canada District five appointments with 192 members. In the United States expansionist sentiment, voiced principally by land speculators and western frontiersmen, was finding vigorous expression in and out of Congress and rumors of impending war with Great Britain were circulating widely.¹⁰⁶ These deeply disturbed many religious leaders—among others, Francis Asbury. Although twenty years had passed since the beginning of Canada missions Asbury had never visited them. In the summer of 1811, hoping to reassure the churches, as also to gratify a long-felt desire, he included Canada in his itinerary. Spent with toil, he was too weak to do more than visit the nearer Circuits. He was received with affection and joy and was himself much impressed by the land* and the people. “[M]y soul,” he wrote, “is much united to them.”¹⁰⁷

As agitation for war increased, long-latent hostility of “U. E. Loyalists” against the United States revived. It was strongest in Lower Canada, particularly in Montreal. Three months before the declaration of war trustees and other laymen of the Montreal Society sent a communication to the British Conference expressing dissatisfaction with the American preachers and their attitude toward Canada. They regard Canadians as “strangers and foreigners,” the complaint read, and the land as “miserable country under a despotic government.”

On these accounts we have long wished and most affectionately desired a union with you, who dwell in a country we are united to by every tie of sacred love and gratitude.¹⁰⁸

The signers appealed for a British missionary and pledged maintenance.

The war bill, after long discussion, passed the House of Representatives on June 4, 1812, by a vote of seventy-nine for and forty-nine against, and the Senate on June 17: nineteen for, thirteen against. War against Great Britain was formally declared on June 19.¹⁰⁹ The vote of Congress reflected public opinion. No war in American history has been more unpopular. Opposition was strongest in the New England states and New York. Nathan Bangs

* “[O]ne of the finest countries I have ever seen: the timber is of a noble size; the cattle are well-shaped and well-looking; the crops are abundant, on a most fruitful soil; surely this is a land that God the Lord hath blessed.”—Francis Asbury, *Journal*, III, 367.

records that "ministers of the gospel . . . refused even to pray for their rulers and country."

It is stated on good authority, that in the time of the war, a number of clergymen in the city of New York held a meeting for the purpose of deliberating on the propriety of praying for their civil rulers, and they finally came to the grave conclusion that they could not do it conscientiously. This, however, was by no means the case with all, though I believe most of the clergy in the eastern states were very much opposed to the measures of the government.¹¹⁰

The feeling of many citizens was reflected by the public declaration of Willard Phillips, a leading New England lawyer and writer, who justified refusal to purchase government bonds on the ground that it was "neither safe nor honorable to lend money to gamesters."¹¹¹

The United States had just grievances against Great Britain but none that might not have been settled without resort to arms. The war was in fact senseless, and when after two and a half years of half-hearted struggle and the loss of thousands of lives the treaty of peace was signed it said nothing whatever about the grievances and disputes on the basis of which war had been declared.

The unreasonableness of the war and the injustice of their having to bear the entire brunt of the land fighting caused deep bitterness among the Canadians. In 1812 the Genesee Conference met on July 23, a month after the declaration of war. None of the Canadian preachers attended the Conference and no report was sent in by the Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District.¹¹² The Lower Canada District was made a part of the Genesee Conference. Appointments for the District were made by Asbury, but the action was little more than a gesture. On June 24 news of the declaration of war had reached Quebec and the government had issued a proclamation ordering all American citizens to leave the province by July 3. Thomas Burch, appointed to Quebec, being a British subject, was permitted to serve. The other new appointees were not allowed to cross the border.¹¹³ After serving for a time in Quebec, Thomas Burch transferred to Montreal to fill the vacancy there.*

* During the period 1800-13, in addition to those whose names have already been mentioned, forty-three men volunteered for service and were sent to Canada as missionaries. Names and years of service are as follows: William Anson (1800-05); James Herron (1800-01); Seth Crowell (1801-03); James Aikens (1801-02); John Robinson (1801-04); Caleb Morris (1801-02); Peter Vannest (1802-04); N. U. Tompkins (1802-03); Samuel Howe (1803-05); Reuben Harris (1803-05); Luther Bishop (1803-08); Martin Ruter (1804-05); Gershom Pearce (1805-07); Robert Perry (1805-11); Andrew Prindle (1806-08, 09-13); Ninian Holmes (1807-13); Elias Pattie (1807-11); Isaac B. Smith (1807-09, 11-13); C. Hulbert (1807-10); Samuel Cochran (1807-09); William Snow (1808-10); Chandley Lambert (1808-10); John Reynolds (1808-13); George McCracken (1809-10); Joseph Sampson (1809-12); Joseph Scull (1809-12); Joseph Lockwood (1809-11); Bela Smith (1810-11); Edward Cooper (1810-13); P. Covenhoven (1810-13); Daniel Freeman (1810-11); Joseph Gatchell (1810-13); James Mitchell (1810-12); Robert Hibbard (1810-13); Samuel Luckey (1811-13); John Rhodes (1811-13); George W. Densmore (1811-13); Enoch Burdock (1811-13); Silas Hopkins (1811-13); J. F. Chamberlain (1812-13). Nine, it will be noted, were in Canada for only one year. Undoubtedly a number of those whose final appointment for Canada is indicated above as 1813 remained in Canada during a part—some possibly, for the entire period—of the war.

Throughout 1813 and 1814 there were few changes in the situation. No preachers from Canada were present at the Conference sessions; no reports were received; and no appointments were made. The two Canadian Districts dropped out of the *Minutes* of the Genesee Conference altogether. Before 1814 ended eight of the twelve preachers of the Upper Canada District apparently found it necessary to locate, since their names do not again appear in the Conference *Minutes*. Much of the burden of holding the work together fell upon Henry Ryan who when the war began was Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District. Three Conferences were held by Ryan during the war but no record of the proceedings has been preserved.¹¹⁴

The Genesee Conference meeting on June 29, 1815, was faced with the difficult task of reconstruction following the devastation caused by war. There had been disastrous losses of property and personnel. Only 1,765 Canadian members were reported, all from Upper Canada,¹¹⁵ as compared with 2,603 in 1810 for Upper Canada and 192 for Lower Canada. There were no missionary funds available for use. The most difficult problem was that of finding preachers who would be acceptable to the Canadian Circuits. Nevertheless the Conference determined to go on with the work, and appointments were made. William Case, who had devoted much time during the conflict to ministering to the wounded and to prisoners of war on the American side of the border, and who was known to have openly opposed the war from the beginning, was named Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District and Henry Ryan was appointed to the Lower Canada District.¹¹⁶ The year brought spiritual victories. On the Niagara Circuit where the most destructive raids had been conducted William Brown exercised a blessed ministry of reconciliation and at the end of the year reported a net increase of fifty-two members. On the Bay of Quinte Circuit a gain of 123 was recorded.¹¹⁷

In Montreal a serious controversy had arisen destined to have far-reaching consequences. When Burch transferred his headquarters to Montreal Peter Langlois—a trustee, Class Leader, and Local Preacher—assisted by a British military officer, Paymaster Webster, filled the Quebec pulpit. Later Langlois appealed for help to William Bennett, General Superintendent and Chairman of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick District. In turn, Bennett sent an earnest plea to England for reinforcements and the Methodist Conference included in its appointments for 1814, "Montreal, Richard Williams;* Quebec, John Strong."¹¹⁸ All of this was done without consultation with Presiding Elder Ryan, Williams even beginning to occupy the pulpit of the Montreal chapel without so much as saying "by your leave." Ryan's was not the kind

* Alexander Sutherland, in *A New History of Methodism*, H. B. Workman, W. G. Townsend, and G. Eayrs, Eds. (II, 211) says that Samuel Leigh was sent to Montreal. This appears to be erroneous. It is at variance with the *British Minutes* for 1814 (IV, 22) which list Samuel Leigh as stationed in New South Wales.

of temperament to be imposed upon. He resented what seemed to him to be unwarranted intrusion, declaring—referring to the British missionaries: “I have opposed them in life; I will oppose them in death, and at the bar of God!” The local Society was divided, but the trustees voted the use of the chapel to the British preacher. A protest by Henry Ryan and “a kind and affectionate letter” of remonstrance by Asbury, forwarded to the British missionary secretaries, failed to settle the difficulty. The group which adhered to the American Society located a new preaching house and the Genesee Conference in 1816 stationed William Brown in Montreal. The English missionary organized a new Circuit, with the Montreal Society as the head. A deadlock seemed to have been reached.¹¹⁹

William Black and William Bennett of Nova Scotia were delegated by the British Conference to present the British view to the General Conference of 1816. Henry Ryan and William Case were members of the Genesee Conference delegation. On the ninth day of the session a committee of three was named “to confer with the delegates from the British Connexion.” The committee reported on May 18, stating that the desire of “the great majority of the people in Upper and Lower Canada” appeared “to be supplied, as heretofore, with preachers from the United States;” that the work included twelve Circuits and one Station, with eleven meeting houses; concluding with the resolution

That we cannot, consistently with our duty to the societies of our charge in the Canadas, give up any part of them, or any of our chapels in those provinces to the superintendence of the British connexion.¹²⁰

The report was “confirmed.” A letter to the London Methodist Missionary Society was drafted by a committee appointed for the purpose and approved by the Conference, which also presented “the sum of \$100 to Messrs. Black and Bennett,” presumably to apply toward their expenses.

The net effect of all this seemed to be only to increase the ardor of the British Missionary Society. Before the close of 1816 there were six British missionaries—an addition of four—at work in Lower Canada. In 1818 the British *Minutes* report a District—“The Canadas”—with eight Circuits and nine missionaries, including two in Upper Canada—at Cornwall and at Kingston. This year the new recruits were stationed at the very centers of American-Canadian Methodism, the Bay of Quinte and York (Toronto).¹²¹ Nor were the newcomers second-rate men.

They were Englishmen—they were generally better educated—they were better clad, and appeared more genteel and clerical. Their moderately competent and reliable missionary allowances saved them from the care and want which the others often acutely experienced. Their better financial system in the societies was also to their pecuniary advantage.¹²²

At the 1816 session of the Genesee Conference it was agreed that a preacher should not be stationed at Quebec but that it should be given over to English occupancy. As a means of strengthening the Lower Canada District the Bay of Quinte Circuit was transferred to it. In June, 1817, for the first time, the Genesee Conference session was held within the bounds of Canada, meeting in the Elizabethtown Chapel on the Augusta Circuit, Bishop Enoch George* presiding. The Bishop's sermon on Sunday morning marked the beginning of a revival which spread through the Circuits of both Districts, with hundreds of conversions and some 1,400 additions to the membership of the churches.¹²³ As might have been anticipated, however, invasion by British missionaries of areas already occupied by the Americans had resulted in rivalry, unseemly jealousy, and no little bitterness of feeling. A contributory factor in the controversy, as is pointed out by Webster in his *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada*, was the agitation against "foreign ecclesiastical superintendence" on the part of Anglican "high-church politicians" who were partial to the British missionaries, not only on political grounds—charging that the American missionaries were "political agents, sent to teach the people sedition"—but also because the Wesleyan Methodist Societies continued to consider themselves a branch of the Church of England.¹²⁴

Some outstanding men went to Canada from the United States during these years—Nathaniel Reeder and John Dempster, the son of James Dempster, later renowned for his great contribution to the cause of theological education—and Isaac Puffer,¹²⁵ who in 1817 began forty years of laborious pioneer service in behalf of Canadian Methodism.

By 1819 the unseemly rivalry had become so much of a scandal that the Committee in England wrote, forbidding its missionaries to

continue their labours in stations previously occupied by the American brethren, except when the population is so large or so scattered that it is evident a very considerable proportion of them must [otherwise] be neglected.¹²⁶

Alas, the aggressive mood of the missionaries was such that the injunction was "as water spilt upon the ground."¹²⁷

On May 1, 1820, the General Conference met in Baltimore, with "the

* Enoch George (1767[?]-1828), a native of Virginia, received his earliest strong religious impressions from the preaching of Devereux Jarratt. After traveling for a short time, by appointment of Asbury, on a North Carolina Circuit he was received on trial in 1790 and appointed to Pamlico Circuit. Early in his ministry (about 1795) he became Presiding Elder, serving Districts in South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, and Maryland. He was elected Bishop in 1816. Samuel Luckey described him as "of medium height . . . of gross structure. . . . [with] a coarse-favoured, weather-beaten . . . [countenance] . . . the only man I ever beard, who could rob me of my self-possession, and take forcible command of my feelings, despite my previous determination to the contrary." Although possessed of great energy of character and immense capacity for hard labor, he cannot be said to have been well adapted to the episcopacy. He was inclined too easily to make compromises, lacking in systematic planning, and almost indifferent to the enforcement of rules of order in presiding over Conferences. His kindliness and sympathy endeared him to the preachers.—William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, 186ff.; Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William M'Kendree*, I, 353f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 35f.

business of the Canadas" one of its chief concerns. As soon as routine matters of organization were out of the way Bishop Enoch George presented "an oral communication respecting the work of God in Canada."¹²⁸ Case and Ryan who, as in 1816, were members of the Genesee Conference delegation, in disproof of statements which had been circulated in England, that the British colonies were "destitute of the means of grace," had prepared a statistical statement showing that Upper Canada, with a population less than 100,000, possessed 211 recognized Protestant religious teachers, of whom 16 were Anglican clergymen, 15 Presbyterian or Congregational Ministers, 25 Baptist Ministers and Preachers of various sorts, and about 10 Quakers; while the Methodist travelling Preachers numbered 33 (5 only being European), aided by 47 Local Preachers and 65 licensed exhorters. The census goes to show that at this date *two-thirds* of the stated ministry of the word of God in Western Canada were supplied by Methodism.¹²⁹

A letter, under date of February 25, 1819, from the British Missionary Secretaries—Jabez Bunting, Richard Watson, and Joseph Taylor—to Bishop William McKendree was submitted to the Conference by the Bishop,* expressing sorrow

that any interference should have ever taken place between your missionaries and those sent by the British conference, who most earnestly wish that their missionaries may labor in harmony with all good men.¹³⁰

Also presented to the Conference were numerous memorials and petitions from the several Circuits in Upper Canada, protesting against the interference of the British missionaries, and praying that they might continue to be supplied with the ministry and ordinances of religion by the American Conference.¹³¹ These, together with Bishop George's statement, were referred to a committee of five, Nathan Bangs, chairman.

On May 17, the General Conference adopted a series of six resolutions "on Canada affairs" presented by the committee, the first reading:

That it is the duty of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to continue their episcopal charge over our societies in the Canadas, except Quebec.†

The second resolution included an address "to the brethren in Canada" assuring them of determination "to continue to afford you all the ministerial aid in our power," and expressing belief that the British Conference had been "misled by partial and erroneous statements sent by interested persons in Canada."¹³² These "interested persons," it appears from Webster's account, were certain British Wesleyan missionaries who were sympathetic

* The *General Conference Journal* makes no mention of the presentation of this letter, but in this connection the incompleteness of the official records should be borne in mind.

† On the final day of the Conference (May 27), "the Canada business" having been brought up for consideration again and again, this resolution was amended by adding: "provided, nevertheless, that the episcopacy shall have authority to negotiate with the British Conference respecting Lower Canada in the way and manner they shall see fit."—*G. C. Journals*, I, 237.

with an Anglican ambition to make the Church of England an Established Church in the colonies, with exclusive rights of occupancy.¹³³

The third resolution authorized the insertion of the following note in the *Discipline*:

As far as it respects civil affairs we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that be; and therefore it is expected that all our preachers and people who may be under the British or any other government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.¹³⁴

By a subsequent resolution (May 22), the Bishops were asked to send a delegate to the British Conference at its next session and furnish him "with the necessary instructions." John Emory was appointed as delegate.¹³⁵

For the second time the Genesee Conference met this year (1820) in Canada—on this occasion in Lundy's Lane Chapel, "within sound of the Falls of Niagara." Of twenty men ordained, several "had fought on opposite sides in the sanguinary battle . . . at Lundy's Lane just six years before" and, following their ordination, "were to be seen locked in each other's arms, shedding tears of fond affection."¹³⁶ The boundaries of the two Districts were again altered—the Lower District being enlarged to include, in addition to Lower Canada, the entire Ottawa Circuit and all of the work on the northern shore of Lake Ontario as far west as York (Toronto). Case and Ryan once more exchanged Districts.¹³⁷

John Emory proceeded to England, bearing a cordial fraternal message to the British Conference signed by Enoch George, President, and Alexander M'Caine, Secretary of the General Conference. He had extended conferences with the Missionary Secretaries, suggesting a division of territory involving withdrawal of the Methodist Episcopal Church from Lower Canada. This proposal was agreed to by the Secretaries and by them recommended to the British Conference, details to be "left to future negotiations." The plan was endorsed by the Conference, meeting in Liverpool in August, 1820; an extended series of resolutions was adopted, and a cordial response returned to the General Conference.¹³⁸ The sixth resolution of the series sets forth the principle that "it would be inconsistent with our unity"—the American Methodists and ourselves being but one body—"to have different societies and congregations in the same towns and villages," and declares that "the simplest and most effectual manner" of applying the principle appears to be: to accede to the suggestion of the American conference, that the American brethren shall have the occupation of Upper Canada, and the British missionaries that of Lower Canada, allowing sufficient time for carrying this arrangement into effect, with all possible tenderness to existing prejudices and conflicting interests on

both sides; the arrangement to be completed within a period to be fixed as early as possible by the missionary committee.¹³⁹

The British Missionary Committee was directed by the Conference to inform "the private and official members, trustees, &c" in Upper Canada of this action, advising them to put themselves and their chapels under the pastoral care of the American preachers; and "the bishops of the American connection" were directed to send a similar letter to "the private and official members, trustees, &c.," in Lower Canada. Accordingly a long and very frank letter was addressed by the British Missionary Secretaries to their missionaries admitting that the case of the Montreal Chapel "was one which we could never justify to our minds"; that "the committee have in many instances had but a partial knowledge of the real religious wants of the upper province, and of its means of supply"; and that they blame themselves "for not having obtained more accurate information on some particulars." The Secretaries name "Messrs. Williams and Hick" as members of the committee, "who are to choose as an associate a third preacher in full connection," to meet with "an equal number of preachers appointed by the American bishop" to carry the arrangement into effect.¹⁴⁰

On October 16, 1820, his colleagues "being necessarily at a great distance, in the discharge of their official duties in the south and west," Bishop William McKendree wrote from Alexandria, D. C., to William Case, acquainting him with what had been done, saying, a "transfer of societies and places of preaching will of course follow"; announcing the appointment of "brother Ryan and yourself, with authority to associate with you a third preacher in full connection" to meet with the British committee; and exhorting him to "fail not to use every means in your power for the prompt execution of the arrangements . . . in the most harmonious and affectionate manner." The Bishop also enclosed a tactful letter, phrased in affectionate terms, to be sent to the members and officials of the churches involved.¹⁴¹

The plans were well laid, the details as complete as could have been devised, and motive and spirit in the finest Christian tradition. But the planners had failed to reckon with the emotions and attitudes engendered by long-drawn-out political strife, religious dissension, and local loyalties. More trouble was to follow.

Little information is available on the procedure followed by the two committees. After 1820 the Lower Canada District does not appear in the *General Minutes*. The line of division decided upon was the boundary between the two political divisions, with two exceptions: the British retained Kingston in Upper Canada on the ground that it was a garrison town where a British minister was necessary; the American Methodists kept the Ottawa Circuit—although most of it was in Lower Canada—since most of the members of the

churches were immigrants from the States.¹⁴² In Montreal the little group who had steadfastly adhered to their American allegiance refused to go in with the British Methodists (though Case and Ryan visited them and urged them to do so), persuaded some Americans in the city to join with them, and extended a call to a Presbyterian minister in the States. "Thus originated the American Presbyterian Church" (of Canada).¹⁴³ The British Methodist Societies in Upper Canada at this time had a membership of some four hundred people, many of whom "declined the overtures of the American preachers."

Despite difficult economic conditions following war, the years 1816–20 were a time of rapid growth in population and church membership in Upper Canada. For a brief period after the war's close war-time inflation prevailed but by 1817 with flour still at \$14. a barrel—one-half the earlier price—potatoes \$2. a bushel, wheat \$4., beef and mutton "ninepence a pound," there was widespread scarcity and want, and many became dependent upon government relief.¹⁴⁴ Immigration from the United States and Europe increased, a large number of immigrants coming from Scotland and Ireland. In 1820 alone 900 Scotch immigrants settled in Lanark and Dalhousie townships; in 1821, 1,883 more in North Sherbrooke and Ramsay.¹⁴⁵ Within two years forty new townships were surveyed and many hundreds of immigrants pursued their lone-some way along newly marked wilderness trails. But however far they went, they were sought out by Methodist missionaries who "held meetings in their shanties, baptized the children [and] visited the aged and sick." The Genesee Conference report for 1821–22 lists two Upper Canada Districts with seventeen Circuits and 5,331 members, served by 26 preachers.¹⁴⁶

Word of the founding in 1819, in New York, of the Methodist Missionary Society had reached Upper Canada in 1820, prompting the preacher in the little meeting house of York to inquire:

Could the Methodist Missionary Society afford us some assistance? . . . There are many parts to which the labours of our preachers cannot be extended . . . many new settlements so detached from the circuits that it is impossible, or very difficult, to visit them often . . . I know of no way to meet their wants, except sending missionaries among them.¹⁴⁷

The appeal did not go unanswered. The Genesee Conference *Minutes* for 1821, in addition to the Circuits mentioned above, list: York, and mission to the new settlements, Upper Canada, Fitch Reed; Kenneth M. K. Smith, missionaries.¹⁴⁸

In a letter to Thomas Mason, Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society, dated March 22, 1822, Fitch Reed stated that in order to extend their labors to all settlements where desire for preaching was expressed

it was necessary to travel over a large extent of country, frequently without any

open roads, and sometimes without even the mark of an axe upon trees to guide us from one settlement to another. . . . [Brother Smith] . . . has performed his tours altogether on foot, directing his course by a small pocket compass where there was no path, and sometimes travelling from four to ten miles without meeting with the footsteps of man, or a house to shelter him from the storm. . . . We have formed six societies, and added nearly seventy members. . . . Two Sabbath schools have been formed, in which are about fifty or sixty children. . . . The townships which form our Missionary field this year, are Toronto, Trafalgar, Chinguacousy, Esquesing, and Erin.

In 1820 General Conference had before it a petition for the organization of a separate Annual Conference in Upper Canada. No decisive action was taken, the Conference merely including in its resolutions "on Canadian Affairs" the statement, "it is thought to be inexpedient for the present."¹⁴⁹ During the quadrennium agitation for separation increased—particularly among the preachers—some of whom felt that they suffered a serious handicap in their labors because of anti-British sentiments attributed to them, mistrust of the colonial government, and necessity of crossing the border into the United States to attend Conference and receive their appointments. Although not elected as delegates Presiding Elders Ryan and Case attended the General Conference of 1824—the former to urge the authorization of an independent Canadian Church; the latter to use his influence for a separate Canada Conference.¹⁵⁰

General Conference met at Baltimore on May 1, 1824. As four years before, a committee of five members was authorized on "the Canada business." To this committee was referred a section from the Episcopal Address; numerous memorials, and petitions; and certain documents on John Emory's mission to the British Conference, and its results. Following report of the committee a mildly worded resolution was adopted referring to "those points in the late agreement between the two connections which have not, on the part of their missionaries been fulfilled," and two other resolutions as follows:

1. That there shall be a Canada Conference under our superintendence, bounded by the boundary lines of Upper Canada. . . .

2. That a circular shall be addressed to our preachers and members included within the bounds of the Canada Conference, expressive of our zeal for their prosperity, and urging the importance of their maintaining union among themselves.¹⁵¹

The organizational meeting of the Canada Conference was held in Hallowell (now Picton), beginning August 25, 1824, Bishops George and Hedding, presiding.¹⁵² This may be said to have marked the culmination of the Upper Canada Mission, inaugurated by William Losee in 1791 resulting—after thirty-three years of heroic pioneer ministry—in an Annual Conference of two Districts, twenty-one Circuits and missions, thirty-six preachers,* and a

* Missionary appointments to Canada, according to the *General Minutes*, during the period 1815–24,

membership of 6,150 persons.¹⁵³ On the third day of the Conference session the Canada Missionary Society was organized, auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* Thomas Whitehead was elected President. On the day of its organization it had nine branch societies which that day paid into the treasury of the Conference Society \$144.¹⁵⁴

Organization as a separate Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was not sufficient to satisfy the Canadian preachers.† On the very day of organization a "Memorial for Independence" was adopted, praying for favorable action by the next General Conference on setting up a Church, separate from the body in the United States.¹⁵⁵ The 1828 General Conference adopted a series of resolutions on the matter, the first of which was:

That the compact existing between the Canada Annual Conference and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States be, and hereby is dissolved by mutual consent, and that they are at liberty to form themselves into a separate Church establishment.¹⁵⁶

The Canada Conference met in October, 1828, Bishop Elijah Hedding presiding. The question of independence was referred to a special committee of nine, which after "a patient consideration of the whole subject for three days" recommended separate organization as "expedient and necessary." The new body was promptly organized‡ under the name of "The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada."¹⁵⁷

and years of service of each, were as follows: Ezra Adams (1815-24); David Culp (1815-24); John Rhodes (1815-17); David Youmans (1815-22); William Brown (1815-18); William Case (1815-24); Henry Ryan (1815-24); Thomas Madden (1815-24); Andrew Prindle (1815-18); Israel Chamberlain (1815-17); John Arnold (1815-16); Nathaniel Reeder (1815-19); Joseph Hickcox (1815-17, 1818-20); Thomas Whitehead (1815-16); Elijah Warren (1816-18); John Hamilton (1816-17); Peter Jones (1816-18); Wyatt Chamberlain (1816-24); John Dempster (1816-17); George Ferguson (1816-24); Gideon Lanning (1817-18); Caleb Swary (1817-18); Isaac B. Smith (1817-24); James Jackson (1817-24); John W. Byem (1817-18); William Barlow (1817-18); Isaac Puffer (1817-22); Thomas McGee (1817-18); William Jones (1818-22); Daniel Shepherdson (1818-24); Samuel Belton (1818-24); William W. Rundle (1818-20); Alpheus Davis (1818-19); Alvin Torrey (1818-24); Elias Bowan (1818-19); R. M. Everts (1818-20); Robert Jeffers (1818-22); James Wilson (1818-22); John Tuke (1818-20); James G. Peal (1818-23); Timothy Goodwin (1818-21); Calvin N. Flint (1818-23); Charles Northrop (1818-20); Trueman Dixon (1819-21); Aurora Seager (1819-20); Franklin Metcalf (1819-24); Thomas Demorest (1819-24); Elijah Boardman (1819-21); William H. Williams (1820-24); K. M. K. Smith (1820-24); D. C. Spore (1820-22); Philander Smith (1820-24); Fitch Reed (1820-22); John Ryerson (1821-24); George Farr (1821-22); William Slater (1822-24); John Parker (1822-24); Charles Wood (1822-24); Ezra Healey (1822-24); William Ryerson (1823-24); Robert Courson (1823-24); William Griffiths (1823-24); Joseph Atwood (1823-24); Jacob Poole (1823-24); David Wright (1823-24); Joseph Castle (1823-24); Solomon Waldron (1823-24).

* The Genesee Conference and the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church continued for some years to aid missionary work in Upper Canada.

† Henry Ryan returned from the General Conference of 1824 in extreme ill temper and proceeded at once to convene the Local Preachers of his District for consideration of immediate total independence. When at the session of the Canada Conference he was not reappointed Presiding Elder he led a secession movement and with a small group of followers organized in 1827 "The Canadian Wesleyan Methodist Church."

‡ Overtures made to Nathan Bangs and Willbur Fisk to accept the office of Bishop having been declined, the body chose William Case (1780-1855)—the oldest Traveling Preacher—as General Superintendent to serve until the ensuing Conference. He did not seek consecration as Bishop, preferring to be designated President *pro tempore*. The next year he was re-elected President, and no consecration to the office of Bishop ever took place. In 1833 the new Church united with the British Conference; in 1840 it separated, taking the name the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada; in 1847 it rejoined the British Connection; in 1855 again resumed independent status, in conjunction with Lower Canada, as the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1874 the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Methodist New Connexion, and the Conference of Eastern British America united to form the Methodist Church in Canada. Finally, in 1884, the Methodist Church in Canada; the Methodist Episcopal Church in

"TO BREAK UP NEW GROUND"

While in the early years the terms "preacher" and "missionary," as has been noted, were used interchangeably,* as time went on "missionary" began to be used in a more restricted and definitive sense—a distinction being made between preachers appointed to Circuits already organized, whose support—such as it was—was more or less assured, and those assigned "to break up new ground"—to use Asbury's phrase. The latter, who were without assured support,† were designated as "missionaries."

There was a difference also in the manner of their appointment. The preachers regularly appointed had nothing to say concerning where they were sent. Only in exceptional cases were they consulted by Asbury—or, when Presiding Elders for Districts came to be the rule, by the elders under whom they served. Those called upon "to break up new ground" were not, however, thus assigned. When new, unmapped territory was to be opened up volunteers were called for, and no man was appointed unless he freely offered to go. This fact is well authenticated from original sources. In 1786 at the Conference in Virginia the need for preachers to go to Georgia was under consideration and, Jesse Lee relates:

if any one felt freedom to offer themselves for that service, they were requested to speak: several persons offered, more than could be spared. It was concluded that two only should go, and Thomas Humphris, and John Major were accepted.

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Earlier in this chapter account was given of the work of Elijah Woolsey in Upper Canada. Referring to his considering "offering" himself "as a missionary" Woolsey says:

at that time it was customary to send to Canada only such as volunteered to go. . . . D. Dunham came from Canada, and asked me if I would go with him to the province. I consented. . . . 159

Thomas Coke, in his *Journal*, tells of two young men volunteering for Kentucky. A letter had been received at the Conference held in Mecklenburg County, Virginia (April, 1787) from "Brother Hawes" appealing for assistance, but warning of the perils from Indians. Coke records:

After this letter was read, a blessed young man (brother *Williamson*) offered himself as a volunteer for this dangerous work. [Coke, a few days later, goes on to another Conference in Baltimore which began on May 1.] At this Confer-

Canada; the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada; and the Bible Christian Church, united to form the Methodist Church, Canada.

* See p. 101.

† "Though we had no Missionary Society at that time, nor consequently any funds for the support of those who went into the new settlements, yet Bishop Asbury was in the habit, as he passed through the more wealthy portions of the work, of soliciting donations from benevolent individuals for the purpose of sustaining those who might volunteer their services to 'break up new ground'"—N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 263.

ence another young man offered himself as a volunteer for *Kentucky*: and the two preachers are to be sent off as soon as possible, breathing the true spirit of Missionaries.¹⁶⁰

The *General Minutes* for 1790 list as a new appointment: "Danville [Kentucky], Thomas Williamson, Stephen Brooks."¹⁶¹

Henry Smith gives an account of the circumstances of his going to Kentucky as a missionary in 1795:

Bishop Asbury called for volunteers to go to Kentucky, and fixed his eye upon me as one. I said, 'Here am I, send me.' . . . I was ordained in a private room, before conference opened; and in a few hours after my ordination John Watson and myself were on horseback, on our way to Kentucky, almost before any one knew we were going.¹⁶²

Although his appointment is not specifically so designated in the *General Minutes* both Nathan Bangs and Jesse Lee state that in 1799 Tobias Gibson "volunteered his services as a missionary to Natchez, in the Mississippi Territory."¹⁶³ Numerous other instances might be cited.¹⁶⁴

It is not until 1803 that the designation "missionary" appears in the *Minutes* of the Conferences. Under Question 13 of the 1803 *Minutes*, Baltimore Conference, Pittsburgh District, "Where are the preachers stationed this year?" is found the entry "Deerfield, Shadrach Bostwick, missionary."¹⁶⁵ Characterized by Bishop Hedding as "a glorious man," Bostwick was one of the great men of early Methodism. Educated as a physician, he began his career as a Methodist itinerant in 1791 and for seven years traveled extensive Circuits in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. During 1798-99 he was Presiding Elder of the New London District, and for the three following years of the Pittsfield District, New York Conference, where his "quarterly tour reached from Connecticut into Canada."¹⁶⁶ In 1803 he volunteered for the Western Reserve, and within its wilderness area on the western frontier he formed the Deerfield Circuit by following Indian trails and marked trees from one little settlement to another. "Extraordinary labors and sacrifices" were required to make the round of the Circuit but by the end of the year he reported sixteen church members, and the Circuit was attached to the Monongahela District (Baltimore Conference) as a regular appointment. In 1805 Bostwick found it necessary to locate, and resumed the practice of medicine.

Also in the 1803 *Minutes*, under the New York Conference, appears a second listing: Pittsfield District, "St. John's and Soreille, Elijah Chichester, Laban Clark, missionaries." St. John's and Soreille (or Sorel) were villages on the Richelieu River, in Lower Canada. They had some English-speaking residents, but most of the people were French Catholics. After a few months, Chichester, having had no success in his labors, went to Montreal to fill out

his year and at its close returned to the United States. Clark, meeting with a variety of difficulties, at the year's end reluctantly abandoned the missionary project as hopeless and likewise left the field.¹⁶⁷

The vast expanse of Methodist missionary activities is indicated by the fact that a single District—the Cumberland District of the Western Conference—in 1803–04 included, among its seven Circuits, areas as widely separated as Nashville (Tennessee); Red River; Natchez (Mississippi); and the Illinois country. The one appointment for Illinois was: “Benjamin Young,* missionary.”¹⁶⁸

The *General Minutes* for 1805 record no preachers appointed as “missionaries.” In 1806, in the New York Conference, Lower Canada District, the name of William Snyder appears as appointed “missionary to the French.”¹⁶⁹ The year 1807 saw no less than seven preachers designated as “missionaries.” The first entry is under the Philadelphia Conference, Genesee District: “Holland Purchase, P. Vannest, A. Jenks, missionaries.”¹⁷⁰ Peter Vannest, after having served during 1802–04 as a missionary in Canada, was appointed for two years to Circuits in New Jersey and then in 1807 volunteered as a missionary to the western section of New York. “He forded the Genesee River near the place where the city of Rochester now stands, and in the month of June preached his first sermon in what is now Ogden Center. . . . He returned [at the end of the year] according to the Minutes, fifty members.”¹⁷¹ The following year he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Cayuga District.

The New York Conference this year (1807) listed three missionary appointments† and the New England Conference two.‡ Of the foregoing areas (designated in the *Minutes* as “stations”—certainly an inappropriate term since not infrequently a single “station” embraced an entire state, or in some instances even two or more states) only one reappears in the 1808 *Minutes* as a missionary appointment—Holland Purchase—this year included in the Susquehanna District with George Lane as missionary. In addition, there were several new missionary appointments. In 1809 the number of preachers under missionary appointment was increased to ten, all of whom

* In the *Minutes* for the following year Benjamin Young's name appears under Question 9, “Who have been expelled from the connection this year?” (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 125.) There is reason to believe, however, that this action represented a miscarriage of justice. (See II, ch. IV.)

† The New York Conference appointments were: Albany District: “Bounds of the New York Conference, Freeborn Garrettson, Seth Crowell, Robert Dillon, missionaries.” In 1791 Garrettson had married Catherine Livingston—member of a distinguished family, a woman of culture and wealth—and had established a family residence at Rhinebeck, on the east bank of the Hudson, which Asbury, finding it a haven of rest from his exhausting travel, characterized as “a good, simply elegant, useful house for God, his people, and the family.” The assignment was not a typical missionary appointment. It is described by Nathan Bangs in his *Life of Freeborn Garrettson* as “an accommodation to Mr. Garrettson, that he might feel at liberty to preach at large, visit the churches in different places, and confirm the souls of the disciples” (p. 211). In 1808 he was stationed at Rhinebeck and again in 1809, 1810, and 1816 designated as a “missionary.”

‡ The New England Conference Missionary appointments were: “Kennebeck District, Vermont and New Hampshire, Thomas Skeel, missionary; District of Maine, John Williamson, missionary.”

were designated as District missionaries.* Even with this considerable number of missionaries in service the territory encompassed within their extensive Circuits included by no means all of the new areas reached by Methodist itinerants. On a large proportion of the Circuits the preachers added appointments in newly established settlements, and within many of the Districts new Circuits were laid out and preachers appointed to them.

METHODIST BEGINNINGS AMONG THE INDIANS

It cannot be said that the missionary zeal of the earliest Methodist pioneers expressed itself in extensive efforts for the conversion of the Indians. Wherever their labors extended they must have come in contact with them but evidence is lacking that, at any time during the closing years of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, organized effort was made by Methodists for their evangelization.

The work of John Eliot, Congregational "apostle to the Indians" among the Mohican (1646-90), had led to the organization of the first Protestant missionary society in the British Isles. The missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (the S.P.G.), organized in 1701, which had seventy-seven missionaries in the American colonies at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, had concern both for the Christianization of the Indians, and for the Negro slaves and the white population who, one of them declared, were as "destitute of a sense of religion as the natives themselves." Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), following his enforced resignation as pastor at Northampton, Massachusetts, accepted an offer from the S.P.G. to become a missionary to the Housatonnuck Indians at Stockbridge. He continued his missionary service for seven years (1751-58), resigning to accept the presidency of Princeton College.

The Indian missionary ministry of David Brainerd, Presbyterian minister, who labored among the Indians of New Jersey and Pennsylvania beginning in 1743, was widely influential.† His diary was a factor in the de-

* Preachers appointed as missionaries during the years 1809-19, inclusive, not previously listed, were as follows: 1809—Western Conference, Cumberland District, James Gwin; Muskingum District, Robert Cloud; Philadelphia Conference, Schuylkill District, William Colbert; Jersey District, Joseph Osburn; New York Conference, New York District, Ebenezer Washburn; South Carolina Conference, Oconee District, "Tombeckbee" (Tombigbee), M. P. Sturdevant; Sealeuda District, James H. Millard; Camden District, James E. Glenn. (Commenting on these South Carolina Conference appointments, Robert Paine quoting from the diary of M'Kendree, says, "Here was the beginning of the missions to the slaves in South Carolina" (*Life and Times of William M'Kendree*, I, p. 219). 1810—Philadelphia Conference, West Jersey District, John M'Claskey. 1816—Philadelphia Conference, Schuylkill District, William Hunter; New York Conference, New York District, Seth Crowell. 1817—Baltimore Conference, Carlisle District, Lawrence Everhart (German missionary) appointed in 1818 to the Monongahela District, in 1819, to the Pittsburgh District; Philadelphia Conference, Schuylkill District, Henry Kunzelman (German missionary). 1819—Mississippi Conference, Mississippi District, New Orleans, Mark Moore; Catawba District, Alexander Talley (missionary to Alabama territory); New York Conference, New York District, William Phoebus; New England Conference, Kennebeck District, Joseph A. Merrill.

† John Wesley: "Sat. 8. [1767]—At the request of Mr. Whitaker, of New England, I preached and afterwards made a collection for the Indian schools in America. A large sum of money is now collected; but will money convert heathen? Find preachers of David Brainerd's spirit, and nothing can stand before them; but without this, what will gold or silver do?—*Journal*, v, 226.

cision of Henry Martyn to dedicate his life to Christian missions, as also in that of William Carey. It made a deep impression likewise on the minds of Thomas Coke, Joseph Pilmoor,¹⁷² and Francis Asbury. In his *Journal* Asbury wrote:

I reflected with pain, that we had never reprinted, in America, the life, labours, travels, and sufferings of that great man of God, David Brainerd of gracious memory; it would be a book well fitted for our poor, painful, and faithful missionaries;* none but God and themselves know what they suffer. . . .¹⁷³

In Pennsylvania David Zeisberger, most famous of Moravian missionaries to the Indians, was abundant in labors. His early ministry, beginning in 1745, by 1772 had resulted in the conversion of not less than five hundred Indians, and for years thereafter—although striving against great odds—he was indefatigable in zealous efforts.¹⁷⁴

True to the Quaker tradition and inspired by the zeal of William Penn and John Woolman for the education of the red men, the Quakers had been active in establishing mission stations and schools among Indians, including the Six Nations in Southwestern New York, the Shawnees in Indiana, and others.¹⁷⁵

The labors of all these missionaries must have been well-known to the leaders of American Methodism. Moreover, it would seem that the interest and example of Wesley should have strongly influenced them. He had come to America in 1736 as a missionary to the Indians of Georgia under agreement with Oglethorpe, the governor, that until the way was open to inaugurate his mission he was to serve as minister of the Anglican church in Savannah. That the way did not open for carrying out his missionary commission was not by his intent or wish, and a sore disappointment. Throughout his life their christianization continued to be of deep concern to him.†

Strange to relate neither Coke nor Asbury felt deeply the obligation to organize systematic missionary work among Indians. In April, 1787, Thomas Coke makes this casual reference in his *Journal*:

We have in this state [North Carolina] got up to the Cherokee Indians, who are

* John Wesley abridged the *Life of Brainerd*, containing his *Diary*, edited and published by Jonathan Edwards in 1749. Wesley's abridgement bore the title *An Extract of the Life of the Late Rev. Mr. David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians*, By John Wesley, M.A. (Bristol: 1768.) At the British Conference of 1768, in dealing with the question of what could be done "to revive and enlarge the work of God?" Wesley had said: "Let every Preacher read carefully over the Life of Mr. Brainerd. Let us be followers of him, as he was of Christ; in absolute self-devotion, in total deadness to the world, and in fervent love to God and man. We want nothing but this. Then the world and the devil must fall under our feet."—*Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, . . . I, 82.

† On Nov. 25, 1787, Wesley wrote to Francis Asbury: ". . . one thing has often given me concern . . . the progeny of Shem (the Indians) seem to be quite forgotten. How few of these have seen the light of the glory of God since the English first settled among them! And now scarce one in fifty among whom we settled, perhaps scarce one in an hundred of them are left alive! Does it not seem as if God had designed all the Indian nations not for reformation, but destruction? How many millions of them (in South and North America) have already died in their sins! Will neither God nor man have compassion upon these outcasts of men? Undoubtedly with man it is impossible to help them. But is it too hard for God? . . . Pray ye likewise the Lord of the harvest, and He will send out more labourers into His harvest. . . ."—*Letters*, VIII, 24f.

in general a peaceable people. I trust the grace of God will in time get into some of their hearts.¹⁷⁶

Under date of Friday, April 3, 1789, Asbury has this brief *Journal* entry:

I wish to send an extra preacher to the Waxsaws, to preach to the Catabaw Indians: they have settled amongst the whites on a tract of country twelve miles square.¹⁷⁷

Following the session of the Georgia Conference which began on March 13, 1791, when Asbury and Coke together again "journeyed onward toward the North. . . . They visited and preached among the Catawba Indians."* Coke's biographer, Jonathan Crowther, refers to the occurrence and adds, "it was determined to erect a school among them."¹⁷⁸ No extant record is known of this having been done.

Thomas Coke's *Journal* indicates that some attempt was made to reach the Indians in New Jersey. He mentions attending a Conference at Trenton, May 23, 1789; comments on religious conditions in the state; and then interjects this brief statement:

We have three Indians in this district: and who knows but they are the first fruits of a glorious harvest among that people.¹⁷⁹

A Conference in New York followed, opening on May 28. Following brief comments on other matters Coke reverts to the subject of ministry to the Indians:

And through the blessing of God we are now determined to use our efforts to introduce the gospel among the Indians†: in consequence of which, my indefatigable brother, Mr. *Asbury*, is to set off soon for *Fort-Pitt*, where we are in the first instance to build a church and a school, as the grand chief of a nation or tribe of Indians who lives not far from that Fort, and who are at peace with the States, has expressed an earnest desire of having christian ministers among his people. O that the day of God's visitation to those poor outcasts of men, may now be arrived.¹⁸⁰

In *One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions* the author states that in 1801 a Methodist missionary to Upper Canada, Joseph Sawyer, having on various occasions preached to the Indians of the Credit River, baptized an Indian boy to whom he gave his own name, who in after years became a Methodist Local Preacher.¹⁸¹

Nathan Bangs, it has sometimes been asserted, was the first Methodist missionary to preach to the Indians of Canada. It was an isolated incident and apparently had no other result than to awaken in his own mind an in-

* The Catawba, once a powerful Nation, at this time reduced to a remnant, occupied a reservation within the present York and Lancaster counties, South Carolina.—See Grant Foreman, *The Last Trek of the Indians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 316ff.

† The determination, apparently, was more in the mind of Coke than in that of Asbury. The latter, in his *Journal*, mentions these two Conferences but refers not at all to Indian work. He journeyed on, and reached Pittsburgh on July 19, but again makes no mention of the proposed Indian church and school.—*Op. cit.*, II, 51, 52, 56.

terest in Indian missions which years later bore fruit. On New Year's Day, 1803, on his way from little York to the Lake Ontario shore, Bangs was overtaken by the oncoming night and compelled to seek refuge in the house of an Indian trader. After midnight the Indians came in for a dance and when it was over the missionary preached to them.

Having ended my discourse, the chief threw his arms around my neck, hugged and kissed me, called me father, and asked me to come and live with them and be their instructor. The simplicity with which they received my words, and their affection greatly affected me: and this interesting interview with these sons of the forest more than compensated for the inconveniences I had suffered. Indeed, I hoped the time was not far distant when these Heathens should be given to Christ for His inheritance.¹⁸²

At the session of the Ohio Annual Conference at Cincinnati, August 7, 1819, a mission to the Wyandot Indians was approved—the first appointment by the Methodists of a missionary, officially designated as such, to the American Indians. The record reads, in part: "The conference determined that a Missionary be sent to the northern Indians, and that James Montgomery, a Local Preacher, be employed."¹⁸³ This, however, did not represent the beginning of missionary activity among the Wyandot. It was instead the assumption of responsibility by the Ohio Conference for work that had been under way for a number of years at Upper Sandusky.

The Wyandot, classified by Champlain in 1615 as Huron, living earlier in Upper Canada, came into the central part of northern Ohio sometime after 1650, and at this time were located on a reservation in extent approximately nineteen miles from east to west and twelve miles from north to south. They fought on the side of the English in the Revolutionary War and again in 1812–14. In May, 1806, Joseph Badger, under appointment of the Western Missionary Society (Presbyterian, Synod of Pittsburgh), together with three other persons, established a mission at Sandusky. It was disrupted by the War of 1812–14 and was not resumed.¹⁸⁴

At the Ohio Conference held in September, 1814, Marcus Lindsey was appointed to the Marietta Circuit. Sometime later, at a Camp Meeting which he held near Marietta, one of his converts was John Stewart, a free-born mulatto—part Indian.* He was living at the time—drunken and poverty-stricken—with a tavern keeper and was intent on suicide. But by his conversion he was set upon his feet and soon thereafter started upon a career so filled at once with romance and far-reaching influence that it has won a prominent place in Methodist history.

* The chronology is uncertain. By the sequence of incidents in his narrative James B. Finley suggests the inference that Stewart's conversion was earlier than "the fall of 1814." (*History of the Wyandot Mission*, p. 74 ff.) William Warren Sweet says, "on a Sunday in 1815." (*Methodism in American History*, pp. 190 f.) John A. Faulkner in *A New History of Methodism*, H. B. Workman, W. G. Townsend, and G. Eayrs, Eds., II, 364, says, "In 1816"

Following his conversion Stewart managed to rent a house for himself and set himself up in his trade—that of a dyer. He united with the Methodist Church in Marietta and soon thereafter was licensed as an Exhorter. He was a man “of no learning,” but “a melodious singer.” Believing that he had a call from God, “his mind became much exercised about preaching.” Following a severe illness, he went one day into the fields to pray:

It seemed to me that I heard a voice, like the voice of a woman praising God; and then another, as the voice of a man, saying to me, ‘You must declare my counsel faithfully.’ . . . They seemed to come from a northwest direction.¹⁸⁵

Much impressed, Stewart set off with his knapsack to the northwest. At “the old Moravian establishment among the Delawares” at “Goshen, on the Tuscarawas river,” he heard of Indians living on a reservation farther north. Continuing his journey he finally arrived at the house of William Walker, Sr., at Upper Sandusky, a government Indian sub-agent and interpreter. Encouraged by Mrs. Walker, “a most amiable woman, of good education and half Wyandotte,” Stewart began religious work among the tribespeople. He induced Jonathan Pointer, a Negro, to become his interpreter. Freely mixing songs with his exhortations and prayers, he succeeded in awakening considerable religious interest and, in time, won a number of converts—among others Pointer, his interpreter, and several of the Indian chiefs. He continued his labors, with two intervals for trips to Tennessee and to Marietta, until the spring of 1818. About this time objections arose because Stewart, though not ordained, had both administered baptism and performed the marriage ceremony. Learning that a Quarterly Conference was to be held near Urbana, he determined to attend and apply for license as a Local Preacher. Attestation of the granting of license is contained in a letter written to James B. Finley some years later by Moses Crume, who in 1818 was Presiding Elder of the Miami District, Ohio Conference:

John met me in the town of Urbana; from which place I went to the quarterly meeting, accompanied by that man of God, Rev. Bishop George. Here we found Stewart, with several of his red brethren, the Wyandotts, with a recommendation from the chiefs that had been converted, earnestly desiring to have him licensed to preach the Gospel, according to the rule and order of our church. At the proper time, and by the advice of the venerable Bishop George, his case was brought before the quarterly meeting conference, his recommendation read, and his brethren heard, who gave a good account of his life and labors in the conversion of many of their nation: those present testifying for themselves what God had done for them, through his instrumentality; and I think it was with the unanimous vote of that respectable body of men, that he was licensed: all believing that they acted in conformity to the will of God.¹⁸⁶

The report of his work and the licensing of Stewart created so much in-

terest that several of the Local Preachers* present volunteered to go in turn to assist him "until the ensuing session of the Ohio Annual Conference"—it apparently being agreed that when Conference came provision for permanent assistance should be made. Stewart continued to labor among the Wyandot, in association with the missionaries placed in charge, though with increasing ill health, until his death of consumption† on December 17, 1823.¹⁸⁷ Of the Wyandot Mission from 1820 on, we shall have more to say later.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY ORGANIZED

The unusual number and urgency of pressing matters which claimed attention at the General Conference of 1820 were not permitted to crowd out the question of more effective organization of the Church for its missionary task.‡ The subject was brought before the Conference on the fourth day of the session, long considered in committee, a carefully drawn report prepared, and finally, on May 26, the organization of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was approved and a constitution formally adopted.§ Thus was officially launched an organization destined to have a large part in the spread of the Gospel throughout the earth.

At this time the Society had been in actual operation for thirteen months. The method and circumstances under which it had come into existence require detailed description.

More than to any other one person organization was undoubtedly due to the initiative of Nathan Bangs. Writing a few years later he says:

In conversation with the Rev. Joshua Soule on the subject, I remarked to him that if a society could be so organized as to place it in some measure under the control of the general conference, so that the missionaries should come strictly under the direction of the Discipline, and under the control of the proper authority of the Church, as all our other preachers are, I would embark in the enterprize with all my heart. To this he cordially assented.¹⁸⁸

* Among those who assisted Stewart were the Rev. Anthony Banning of Mount Vernon, and—of the Local Preachers of the Circuit—the two brothers Samuel and Martin Hitt, Robert Miller, Thomas Lansdale, Joseph Mitchell; also Moses Henkle, then an Exhorter.—J. B. Finley, *op. cit.*, pp. 95f.

† For six years Stewart had labored zealously for the Wyandot, gaining their complete confidence and making an enduring contribution to their welfare. In 1820 he married and—needing a home—Bishop McKendree collected \$100, with which a sixty-acre tract was purchased adjoining the north line of the Wyandot reservation in Tymochtee township. On this a hewed log cabin was built in 1821. Following his death, at the age of thirty-seven, his body was buried in the garden on his farm. Before their final departure from their reservation the Wyandot "gathered his bones and buried them on the south side of the Wyandot Mission Church . . . over his grave . . . [stands a tombstone, bearing his name and] the inscription 'Earth for Christ.'"—Emil Schlup, "The Wyandot Mission," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, xv, 167f.

‡ The report of its Committee on Missions, as adopted by the General Conference, approved location of the Missionary Society in New York City: ". . . contemplating very important advantages from having the Parent Missionary Society located where the Book-Concern is conducted, so that the Editor and General Book-Steward, for the time being, may always be Treasurer thereof, . . ." as quoted in *The Methodist Magazine*, III (June, 1820), 231.

§ The Episcopal Address, written by McKendree, said, "Perhaps we have not paid sufficient attention to the voice of Providence, calling to a more general, as well as a more detached, spread of the Gospel among the Indians, and among the destitute of our cities, and of many remote and scattered settlements . . . at this moment your attention is emphatically called to this subject by an address from the Wyandotte Indians, requesting us to send missionaries among them, by the wants of thousands of un instructed souls in the cities, towns, and cottages of our widely extended country, and by societies already formed with a design to raise money for such purposes."

The chief considerations influencing the formation of the Society, other than those set forth in the above paragraph, are also stated by Bangs: (1) Although the itinerating system of Methodism was believed to be "the most extensive and energetic missionary system in existence" its operation was crippled for lack of funds for extension into the rapidly increasing number of new and remote settlements. (2) The many missionary societies, denominational and interdenominational, local and general, which had been formed from 1790 on, again and again prompted questioning whether, despite the fact that the "whole system is a missionary system," the Methodists should not also organize a society. (3) Many Methodists were contributing to existing societies money and influence "which otherwise might be brought within our own control." (4) New openings were presenting themselves for "the introduction of Christianity" among the Indians. (5) The extension of foreign missions to more distant fields "might become our duty."* (6) If "suitable measures were adopted" much more money could be raised.¹⁸⁹

In his *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Bangs amplifies these considerations—particularly at two points. He says that as the Church had grown—many new Districts and Conferences having been formed—it had lost somewhat of its original missionary character and needed new missionary stimulus. Also, though there were many new and old settlements where the people "were either too poor or too indifferent about their eternal interests" to support missionaries, there were many churches whose members "had become comparatively wealthy" and were well able to aid in ministering to the needs "of destitute places."¹⁹⁰

Some local Methodist missionary Societies already had been organized or were in process of organizing. A local society existed in Philadelphia previous to April 5, 1819. Bangs says, about the same time that the Society in New York was organized a "Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference" was formed.¹⁹¹

As an outcome of the informal consultations and discussions of the subject a meeting of preachers was held in New York late in 1818 or early in 1819.† Present at this meeting were: Freeborn Garrettson, Joshua Soule, Samuel Merwin, Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, Thomas Mason, Seth Crowell, Samuel Howe, and Thomas Thorp. Laban Clark presented a resolution for "the organization of a Bible and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The resolution was adopted and a committee of three appointed to

* Despite the ever-present fact that lack of sufficient personnel made adequate ministry to the rapidly expanding frontiers impossible, a Church so imbued with the missionary spirit could not longer ignore the insistent calls of fields farther removed. William Carey had reached India in 1793; Robert Morrison had arrived in Canton, China, in 1807; Henry Martyn in Persia in 1811; and Adoniram Judson in Burma in 1812.

† The exact date of this meeting is uncertain. In his *Authentic History of the Missions*, Nathan Bangs says, "in the year 1818" (p. 26). In his *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 82, he locates it "in the beginning of this year" (1819).

draft a constitution.¹⁸² It is of interest to note that of the nine ministers present six had served as missionaries—one in Nova Scotia, three in Upper Canada, and two in Lower Canada.

When the committee was ready with a report on constitution a meeting was called "in the Forsyth-street church [New York] of all the members and friends [of] the missionary cause."¹⁸³ The meeting was held on the evening of April 5, 1819. It had been announced from the pulpits of the six New York City churches on the preceding Sunday and a large number of people had assembled. Nathan Bangs presided as chairman, and addresses were delivered by the chairman, by Freeborn Garrettson, Joshua Soule, and others. Following the addresses, a resolution was offered by Freeborn Garrettson: "Resolved, that it is expedient for this meeting to form a Missionary and Bible Society . . ." Joshua Soule—later a Bishop of the Church—moved, as a method of procedure, "That, in order to accomplish this object, the meeting go into the consideration of a constitution." The draft agreed upon in advance, prepared by Nathan Bangs, was read, certain amendments were made, and the constitution was adopted.¹⁸⁴ Bishop William McKendree, although not present at the meeting, was elected president.* In accord with the provision of the constitution thirty-two "managers" and seven officers† were elected. At a meeting of the Board of Managers, held on April 26, a "Circular" of Information, and an "Address" to the several Annual Conferences and "through them to the members of our Church generally," also prepared by Nathan Bangs, were ordered printed and circulated both in pamphlet form and in the *Methodist Magazine* as a means of creating interest and enlisting members of the Society.¹⁸⁵

The expectation, as made clear by the "Circular" sent to the Annual Conferences, was that the enlarged missionary activities made possible by the support provided by the new Society would be under the immediate auspices of the Conferences.

That the founders had domestic missions primarily in view is quite evident. The object, as stated in the constitution, was

to enable the several annual Conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labours throughout the United States, and elsewhere;—to supply the destitute with Bibles gratuitously, and to afford a cheap supply to those who may have the means of purchasing.

* Bishop McKendree had expressed deep interest in the proposal for the organization of a Missionary Society but he was at this time—although but sixty-two years of age—in a state of extreme physical weakness, worn by the incessant travel and exhausting labors of his itinerant ministry.

† Officers elected, in addition to the president, were: 1st Vice President, Enoch George; 2nd Vice President, Robert R. Roberts; Treasurer, Joshua Soule; Corresponding Secretary, Thomas Mason; Recording Secretary, George Suckley; Clerk, Francis Hall. Of the officers three were Bishops of the Church—William McKendree having been elected to the episcopacy by the General Conference of 1808; Enoch George and Robert R. Roberts by the General Conference of 1816. No one of the Bishops was present at the organization meeting. Joshua Soule and Thomas Mason were the Book Agents, having been elected by the General Conference of 1816. Beginning with its first number, January, 1818, Joshua Soule was also editor of the *Methodist Magazine*.

The objectives of the Society, however, contemplated more than a program of domestic missions. The unoccupied and unexplored areas of the vast American continent and regions and people beyond were definitely included. "We take the liberty of observing," the "Address" stated,

that our views are not restricted to our own nation or colour; we hope the aborigines of our country, the Spaniards of South America, the French of Louisiana and Canada, and every other people who are destitute of the invaluable blessings of the Gospel, as far as our means may admit, will be comprehended in the field of the labours of our zealous missionaries.¹⁹⁶

One of the projects in the minds of the founders of the Society was that of sending "the unadulterated Word to the French of Louisiana and the Floridas." Accordingly, the Board of Managers voted at its meeting on June 7 that a letter be addressed to Bishop McKendree, who had spent the preceding fall and winter in the Southwest,* "requesting his opinion respecting the practicability" of sending "a person to preach to the French inhabitants of the South." At the meeting of the Board on September 1, the Corresponding Secretary presented a letter received in answer to the Board's communication. The first annual report of the Board contains an extract of the answer of Bishop McKendree to the communication expressing his complete approval: "Your plan meets my views of *preaching the Gospel to every creature* better than any one I have yet seen." After stating that Canada, Florida, the state of Louisiana, and the Missouri territory "furnish a large field for missionary enterprise" the Bishop continues:

In these bounds there are many French, some of them friendly to our views of religion. Believing that it would be productive of much good, we have long wished for, and frequently endeavored to procure ministers, who would be itinerant missionaries indeed, to send to our western frontiers, to preach to those inhabitants in French; but we have hitherto been disappointed.¹⁹⁷

At the same meeting a committee was appointed "to take into consideration the subject of Bishop McKendree's letter and report thereon." The committee reported at a meeting of the Board of Managers held in Forsyth Street Church on the evening of October 13 and the report presented was adopted. Immediately following,

It was moved and carried that a committee be appointed to select two young men to acquire the French language in order to carry the resolution adopted in the above named report into effect.¹⁹⁸

This committee was duly authorized and at a meeting held two weeks later (Nov. 1, 1819) in the John Street Lecture Room two young men were

* In October, 1818, Bishop McKendree had presided over the session of the Mississippi Conference held, so the *Minutes* record, at Ford's Meeting House, Pearl River. In his "Journal" the Bishop wrote: "I was in bed, but the president *pro tem* sat near my bedside, and the business of the Conference was done properly." Not until February, 1819, was he able to resume his itinerary.—Cf. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 379ff.

suggested and approved. One of the two was John M. Smith, from whom "a very interesting letter" was read by the chairman;* the second was not identified by name. Thus within seven months of its organization the Society approved its first two candidates for missionary service.

The growth of the Missionary Society during its first year was not rapid. Committees were appointed to present the cause to the churches in and near New York. Reports made at successive meetings of the Board of Managers were indicative of lack of any general interest among church members. Within the first month John Street Church reported "sixteen subscribers," but this was exceptional. Duane Street Church could report only two members and Bowery Church one. At the September meeting committees reported as follows: Forsyth Street, nothing done. Allen Street, twelve subscribers. Two Mile Stone, nothing done. Greenwich, no report. Duane Street, nine annual and one life subscriber. Reports at the October and November meetings were of much the same tenor.

Lack of sustained interest in the cause was in fact evident even within the organizing group. Within the first year eleven of the original thirty-two members of the Board of Managers presented their resignations. The constitution provided that at meetings of the Board fifteen members should constitute a quorum. Apparently difficulty was experienced in securing the attendance of a sufficient number to satisfy this requirement, for at the final meeting of the first year a resolution was adopted commending to the General Conference reduction of the required number to thirteen.¹⁹⁹ The Society, moreover, encountered open opposition as well as lethargy. Some of its opponents contended that the Church itself was so definitely missionary in character that a special organization was quite unnecessary. Others insisted that the members of the Church were too poor to support any other organization than the local church. Still others voiced opposition to "foreign" missions, insisting that the churches had more opportunities for urgently needed service in their local communities than were being met. Regional loyalties also entered as a complicating factor.†

Opposition came also from patrons of the American Bible Society which

* Evidently John M. Smith was diverted from his missionary purpose. No further mention of him is to be found in the *Minutes* of the Board. He became Principal of Wesleyan Seminary in New York (later the White Plains Academy) and subsequently professor of the Latin and Greek Languages and Literature, and Acting Professor of Natural Science, in Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.—*Alumni Record of Wesleyan University*, Frank W. Nicholson, Ed. (New Haven: 1911), p. XLVI.

† When the Society was organized in New York, with its ambitious plan for churchwide operation, special effort was made to gain the cooperation of the Philadelphia brethren—the proposal being that the Mite Society of Philadelphia for Promoting Domestic and Foreign Missions become an auxiliary. At the first meeting of the Board of Managers following organization (April 7, 1819) an address, apparently prepared in advance by Nathan Bangs, was read and approved and "it was ordered that the Rev. Joshua Soule present the same." The reply of the Philadelphia Society was read at the June meeting of the Board (June 7, 1819) and "referred to the Vice President and the Corresponding Secretary." The *Minutes* for that year contain no further reference to the matter. The General Conference of 1820 adopted a resolution "respectfully and affectionately" recommending the Society in Philadelphia "to become Auxiliary to that in New York."—N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 149ff.

had been organized in 1816 as a union of several previously existing societies, the first formed in 1808. The constitution of the Missionary Society, as originally adopted, had used the name "The Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," and in all of its printed matter had stressed as a chief purpose the wider distribution of the Scriptures. Friends of the American Bible Society felt that this was an infringement on the purpose and program of that organization, which was just getting well started.²⁰⁰ The objection was so strongly pressed that at the final meeting of the first year action was taken by the Board of Managers looking toward elimination of the words "Bible" and "in America" from the title.*

Response from some of the Annual Conferences, however, was encouraging. At the September 1, 1819, meeting Joshua Soule reported that in his visit to the New England and Genesee Conferences

he opened a subscription in those Conferences and the preachers generally subscribed; the Conferences also took measures for the formation of auxiliary Societies.²⁰¹

At the first annual meeting of the Society, held at the John Street Church on April 17, 1820, the Board of Managers reported favorable action by the Virginia Conference (conditional on General Conference approval of the Society) on the organization of "The Virginia Conference Missionary and Bible Society, auxiliary to the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," and the recommendation "to each of its members to use his influence to establish branch societies in every district, station, and circuit" within the limits of the Conference. Similar action by the Baltimore Conference was also reported.²⁰² The Treasurer reported receipts for the year in amount of \$823.04 and expenditures of \$85.76¾.

The constitution of the Society was presented to the General Conference held in Baltimore in May, 1820.²⁰³

On May 2, the Episcopal Address had been read to General Conference by Bishop McKendree, and later the section of the address relating to missions—as also a special paper presented by the Philadelphia Society—had been referred to the Committee on Missions.† On May 25 the Committee through its chairman, William Ryland, presented its report, written, there is little doubt, by John Emory.‡ The report set forth the missionary character of the Christian ministry; that Methodism is essentially a missionary system; the claims of the American continent on immediate missionary effort, involving postponement of effort overseas; the special obligation for mis-

* This change was made by the 1820 General Conference.

† The Committee on Missions consisted of William Ryland (Baltimore Conference), John Collins (Philadelphia), Joseph Travis (South Carolina), John Emory (Baltimore), and Eben Smith (New York).

‡ The report was signed by William Ryland, chairman. However, Nathan Bangs (*op. cit.*, III, 143) says, it "was drawn up, I believe, by the late Bishop Emory."

sionary ministry to the Canadas, the Floridas, the State of Louisiana, and the territories of Arkansas and Missouri, and particularly the Indians; the offer of government cooperation in mission schools; and the importance of establishing auxiliary societies in all Conferences. The following is an excerpt:

Your Committee regard the Christian Ministry as peculiarly a *Missionary* Ministry. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,' is the very foundation of its authority, and develops its character simultaneously with its origin. . . . The Missions of Boardman and Pilmore; of Wright, of Asbury, and others, are events in our history not soon to be forgotten. . . . Can *we* then be listless to the cause of Missions? We cannot. Methodism itself is a Missionary system. Yield the Missionary spirit, and you yield the very life-blood of the cause. . . . With these views, they [the committee] submit the following . . . 1st. by the Delegates of the Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled, 1st. That this Conference do highly approve of the institution of the Missionary Society, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the city of New York, and, on the recommendation of the Managers thereof, do agree to, and adopt the following Constitution. . . . ²⁰⁴

The report, after being laid over for a day, was adopted by the General Conference without debate as presented by the Committee.* At their second annual meeting the Board of Managers were able to report that

the General Conference took the subject into consideration, made the necessary alterations in the constitution and gave the Society their unqualified approbation . . . [recommending] it to each Annual Conference, and requested the General Superintendents to use their influence to give effect to the recommendation to form auxiliary and branch Societies within their respective bounds.²⁰⁵

The action of the General Conference is not to be thought of as a commitment of the Church to a new policy or program. It was rather as Findlay and Holdsworth suggest concerning similar action by Wesleyan Methodism—an act of recognition by its highest official body that the Methodist Episcopal Church was, by its divine calling, a Missionary Society, and approval of a form of organization for fuller realization of its vocation.²⁰⁶ The action placed the new organization on a secure foundation. Its founders were encouraged, popular interest was stimulated locally,[†] and attention throughout the Church was directed anew to the cause of missions. At the third monthly meeting following the General Conference (August 9, 1820), the Treasurer was able

* Certain changes in the constitution as originally drafted, recommended by the Board of Managers, were made: elimination of the words "Bible" and "of America" from the title; and, in Article XIII, some additional provisions included.

† Increase in local interest is indicated by the attendance at the first monthly meeting of the Board of Managers following adjournment of the General Conference. Many of the preachers of the New York and other eastern Conferences were present, in marked contrast to earlier meetings when a bare quorum of Board members had been in attendance. A letter was read from Dr. N. Gregory, a member of the Board who was unable to be present, containing a contribution of \$500. A communication from the American Bible Society tendered "a donation of the Scriptures in French and Spanish for the use of the Mission about to proceed to Florida." Interest, however, was slow in filtering down to the local congregations. Two months later when District reports were called for, five of the six committees responded "No report."

to report "the sum of \$1,534.99¼ in the treasury" and a motion was passed informing the Bishops they were "at liberty to draw upon Him [the Treasurer] for the Sum of \$1400."²⁰⁷

What had occurred as regards the second candidate approved for missionary service by the Society on November 1, 1819, the *Minutes* do not state. It is probable that he was Ebenezer Brown, for at the August 9 (1820) meeting Bishop Enoch George informed the Board that he had learned from a recent interview with

the Rev. Ebenezer Brown, the intended missionary to Louisiana, it would be necessary for them to furnish him with money to purchase a horse, & to bear his travelling expenses.²⁰⁸

No action is recorded in the *Minutes* but from a statement in the *Second Annual Report*, covering the year April, 1820–March, 1821, that a missionary had been sent from the New York Conference with instructions "to preach to the French inhabitants of Louisiana,"²⁰⁹ it is inferred that soon after the August meeting Ebenezer Brown must have fared forth on his journey in an attempt to establish the first of the long list of missions of the Society. That he reached New Orleans and that his attempt failed seems evident from the statement of Nathan Bangs that in 1820 Ebenezer Brown, "being disappointed in his attempts to gain access to the French population" in New Orleans,* assisted John Manifee in preaching to an English congregation in that city.²¹⁰

It would be a mistake to assume that these beginnings of organization of the Missionary Society were achieved without difficulty. Nathan Bangs remarked somewhat ambiguously that it "had enemies to encounter of a peculiar character near the seat of its operations." He continues:

It was, indeed, somewhat surprising to witness the unfounded prejudices which existed in the minds of some against the formation of this society, the evil surmises which were expressed respecting its objects, the frivolous objections which were raised by such as misapprehended its design and character, as well as the spirit of indifference with which it was treated by others.²¹¹

Despite all difficulties, however, the managers were sufficiently encouraged by the response from Annual Conferences and from influential leaders among both ministers and laymen to express concern for the early extension of missionary effort for the evangelization of Africans in the West Indies and in Africa; for beginning work in India; and for greater zeal in answering pressing calls "from the Western forests which cover vast tribes of untaught men."²¹²

* The *Minutes* of the June, 1820, New York Conference include the notation, "Ebenezer Brown, missionary to Louisiana." (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 351.) The *Minutes* of the next year (1821) bear evidence that Ebenezer Brown had returned from New Orleans, being appointed at the session to the Middlebury Circuit, Champlain District.—*Ibid.*, I, 371.

IV

Growth and Missionary Expansion in the United States, 1820-44

WITH THE BEGINNING of the third decade of the nineteenth century almost forty years had passed since the independence of the United States had been acknowledged by Great Britain. Many and immeasurable changes had taken place within these years. Then there were thirteen states; now there were twenty-two. Then the occupied areas, with a few scattered exceptions, bordered the eastern coast; now there were states a thousand miles inland from the Atlantic. National consciousness was then only beginning to awaken; now the United States, a self-conscious nation, was recognized as one of the great nations of the world. Developments along various other lines paralleled territorial and political growth. The United States had become the chief dependence of Europe for imports of grain and cotton. Vessels flying her flag were a familiar sight in every port. The works of her scholars, writers, and inventors were beginning to attract worldwide attention.

The nation's population was now rapidly increasing. The fourth census surprised many with its count of 9,638,453. Of the states, New York had the largest number of people. The seven next populous states were, in order of size: Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Ohio, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and South Carolina.* West of the Mississippi the population was inconsiderable. In all the far West, exclusive of Texas, there were probably not more than twenty thousand Americans, other than Indians. However, Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana were beginning to receive an increasing number of settlers and by 1830 Texas alone had a population of approximately 16,000 Americans and three or four thousand Mexicans. The frontier was steadily moving westward and by the end of the period (1844) Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana had ceased to be the "far West"—that appellation was now being applied to Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. Michigan, which in 1820 had only 8,896 people, by 1844 had over 200,000. Within this same period Illinois increased in population from fifty-five thousand to more than five

* The population of these states was: New York, 1,372,812; Virginia, 1,065,366; Pennsylvania, 1,049,458; North Carolina, 638,829; Ohio, 581,434; Kentucky, 564,317; Massachusetts, 523,287; South Carolina, 502,741.

hundred thousand. By 1840 the entire area, except some prairie land far from timber, had been settled—there “was no longer any . . . wilderness.”¹ Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota also had received a steadily growing stream of settlers. From 1836 to 1844 Iowa had an extraordinary growth, during part of this period doubling its population every two years.² When admitted into the Union in 1846, it had approximately 100,000 people.* Before 1844, Ohio’s entire area was occupied and Indiana was rapidly filling up. No longer did the newcomers cling to the rivers but now settled confidently on the prairie lands. Well-built frame houses rose almost overnight, with ample barns, sheds, and poultry-houses. Broad acres were covered with grain, and almost every farm home soon had a fruit orchard and a flourishing garden.† Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont, of the eastern states, were sending many of their best people to the West—men and women of culture and refinement and of wide interests. During this period New England made small gain in population.

Native Americans continued to increase rapidly. Large families were still the rule and improved conditions for health permitted more to reach maturity. The rural population still vastly predominated but the proportion of city dwellers was increasing. At the beginning of the period two cities—New York and Philadelphia—had passed the one hundred thousand mark; and two others—Baltimore and Boston—had more than forty thousand each. The twenties were to be a decade of still more rapid urban growth. Not only the seaport cities, but such inland towns as Albany, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville were also to show phenomenal increase. Western communities destined in later decades to become great cities were as yet but small towns. In 1824, when first incorporated as a municipality, Detroit had only twenty-two hundred people, while Cleveland was scarcely half as large. As late as 1830 Fort Dearborn, around which Chicago was built, had merely a few cabins—the homes of some forty or fifty persons.

Immigration had become an important factor, influencing every phase of the national life. In the early twenties the annual immigration was at a low ebb—the large proportion farmers, laborers, and artisans, with some skilled craftsmen. In 1825 the total passed five thousand. By 1828 the high tide of 1817–18 had again been reached, and in the next two decades (1830–50) almost two and a half million foreign-born were added to the nation’s population. As the years passed, while English, Welsh, and Scotch immigrants continued to come, the proportion of Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians rapidly increased.³

* An Iowa State Census made in 1847 reported the population as 116,454.

† John Stewart: “R. R. Seymour . . . was a wealthy farmer, living near Bainbridge (Ohio), surrounded with everything of this world that heart could wish. He was given to hospitality, and always delighted to entertain the ministers of the Gospel at his princely residence. . . .”—*Highways and Hedges, or Fifty years of Western Methodism*, p. 228.

The major proportion of immigrants tended at first to settle in the coast cities and nearby areas but gradually an increasing number joined the streams of emigrants from the eastern regions to the newer West. The rough and wretched roads made use of the water routes attractive. One stream of the eastern migration moved by way of the Erie Canal to the Great Lakes, penetrating northern Ohio, southern Michigan, northern Illinois, and southern Wisconsin—some finally reaching Iowa and Minnesota. Others used the Ohio and Chesapeake Canal, setting out on the National Road or newer highways across Pennsylvania for the interior of Ohio, or for Indiana and Illinois. Migration from the older South also continued—now in two principal streams, both important socially and politically. The first represented an exodus of the poorer farmers; some seeking to escape the economic effects of slavery; others “affected by slavery not so much economically as in their consciences”;⁴ both groups reenforcing the earlier southern migration to southern Ohio and Indiana; many moving on to Illinois and Missouri—the early settlers of these two latter states coming largely from Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. A quite different stream from the older South moved gradually southwestward, taking their slaves with them, into Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.⁵

A CHANGED AND CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

The nation had not only come into her own politically. She had developed a distinctive national spirit. Americanism had been born.* “America,” said Chief Justice John Marshall in 1821, “has chosen to be, in many respects, and to many purposes, a nation.”⁶ An unlimited faith in the destiny of the nation had taken possession of the mind of its people. All classes, high and low, privileged and poverty-ridden, had experienced a kind of nationalistic afflatus of patriotism, convinced that America was the greatest of all nations, its civilization the highest and best ever attained. The spirit of the times was expressed by George Bancroft, the historian, in his portrayal of the United States as an inspired State, an example in government for all mankind.⁷

Life in the newer sections of the South and the West was still primitive. A missionary laboring in one of the more recently settled parts of Kentucky tells of spending a night in a log cabin without chinking between the logs. During the night there was a heavy rain, freezing as it fell. When he awakened in the morning his heavy beard was a solid cake of ice. From Athens, Georgia, under date of December 12, 1831, Bishop Elijah Hedding wrote to his wife:

For four hundred miles back I have seen but few country houses (I mean except in villages) which had a glass window in them. . . . Not unfrequently we have

* “In the years immediately following the War of 1812–14,” says E. A. Benians, “we discern the birth of a national spirit, democratic and American, spreading from the West to the Atlantic Coast. This new conception becomes the governing force in American history.”—*Race and Nation in the United States, a historical sketch* . . . (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1946), p. 19.

four beds in the same room, occupied with quite a variety of sleepers. Other things are on much the same scale; but the kindness of the people is such that it makes up for other deficiencies.⁸

The allowances of the Circuit Riders in the West in many instances were paid chiefly in produce of divers kinds—corn, molasses, wheat, linsey-woolsey, linen, bearskins, otter skins, and other furs. In 1821 Benjamin T. Crouch records having received in cash only thirty-eight dollars toward his year's allowance. The highest salary paid that year in the Kentucky Conference was received by Peter Cartwright, \$238. Three years later (1824) Cartwright removed to Sangamon County, Illinois. He found that his nearest market was St. Louis, distant "one hundred miles or more." For the grinding of wheat and corn for breadstuff people had to go as far as sixty miles. The settlers, Cartwright says, were generally poor, with little money to spend or give. With a wife and six children to provide for, he received from the people of the Sangamon Circuit, which he traveled, "forty dollars all told," nor was his an exceptional case.⁹ In other sections of the country many Circuit Riders fared no better.

In their ceaseless itineraries the Circuit Riders continued to encounter difficulties in travel, although considerable progress was being made in construction of new roads and improvement of existing highways. By the close of the period (1844), the state of Ohio had altogether some eight hundred miles of macadamized highways. During the decade 1820–30 more than seven hundred miles of canals were opened for travel and commercial navigation, and 1,400 more were under construction. By 1820 steamboat transportation on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers had advanced to the point where travel was comfortable—on the best boats even luxurious—and expeditious. It was not unusual on an upriver journey to cover more than one hundred miles in a day. In 1830 the first railways began operation. By 1834 Pennsylvania had 325 miles of railway actually completed; Virginia had seventy-five miles fully built, and 110 more under construction; and South Carolina had "a railroad 137 miles in length, as yet the longest in the world."¹⁰ By the close of the period, attracted toward the West by the increasing population and the rapidly growing commerce, railroads were becoming a threat to the canal system.

Though means of transportation multiplied, in many parts of the country hardships of cross-country travel persisted. Suffering from a complication of chronic diseases, Bishop McKendree had spent the winter of 1824 in middle Tennessee. Early in March he started for Baltimore to attend General Conference, traveling "in his barouche, drawn by two small but excellent horses." He found the roads exceedingly muddy and rough. Numerous streams that had to be crossed were unbridged, and so swollen by the spring rains that fording them was dangerous. Overnight accommodations often could be

found only in crude, rudely furnished cabins. Robert Paine—later a Bishop—who with three other preachers accompanied the Bishop on horseback, tells of beginning the journey across the Alleghenies:

just at nightfall, near the foot of . . . [a mountain] we found quarters at a miserable little hut. It was our only chance. It was getting dark; no other house for several miles, and the Bishop was sick and in great pain. . . . We carried him into the house, and laid him half dead upon a miserable bed, in a dirty room, which served as a parlor, bed-room, dining-room, and kitchen.¹¹

Not until the twenty-eighth of April did the company reach Baltimore, after two months on a trip of a thousand miles "of slow and toilsome travel." Elijah Hedding, elected to the episcopacy in 1824, like McKendree an indefatigable itinerant, in August, 1830, recorded having held seven Annual Conferences, requiring 1,400 miles of travel. Again in November, 1831, in a letter to his wife written from the Holston Conference, he told of a journey of 1,820 miles since he had left home, most of the way "mud and mire, alternating with stumps, and trees, and stones. I met with few bridges or ferry-boats, so that I had to ford most of the streams."¹² In many parts of the country no public conveyances were available and horseback riding continued to be the only practicable method of travel.¹³ With few exceptions Methodist itinerants had no other possible means of conveyance on their long Circuits. S. R. Beggs left Crawfordsville, Indiana, together with another preacher, to attend the 1829 Illinois Conference at Edwardsville. Before they reached their destination the company had increased to twenty. "We . . . enjoyed our ride [of three hundred miles on horseback] very much," he says. "Traveling in those days had many pleasant features. . . ." ¹⁴ To reach the General Conference of 1832, held in Philadelphia, the Georgia delegation of twelve men traveled the entire distance on horseback.¹⁵ At the 1827 Mississippi Annual Conference "every preacher had his horse." "There was not a wheeled conveyance in the Conference."¹⁶ In many cases attendance on Annual Conferences required long journeys. In 1826 John G. Jones traveled on horseback 500 miles from the Washita Circuit, Louisiana, to his Conference session in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.¹⁷ This length of journey was not exceptional in the West and Southwest.

Dissemination of public information was now more general than in earlier times. The several regions of the country were not so cut off from one another as previously. A striking feature of the times was the increase in number and the widened circulation of periodicals. There had been newspapers in colonial days—the first having been the *Boston News Letter*, established in 1740—but they were few in number and of limited circulation. With the founding of *The Sun* in New York City in 1833 and its sale at one cent a copy, a new era in newspaper publication began. In 1841 Horace Greeley

established *The New York Tribune*¹⁸ which soon attained a wide circulation among both city people and farmers. By the end of the period (1844) newspapers were everywhere circulated and Americans had become a nation of newspaper readers, gaining thereby a much wider knowledge of what was going on in the nation and the world.

Developments in newspaper publication were paralleled by the growth of religious periodicals.* *The Christian Advocate and Journal*, founded in 1826,† within twelve months had achieved a circulation of 15,000—later increased to 30,000—the largest of any periodical in the world, the *London Times* not excepted.¹⁹ A special feature was its department of "Missionary Intelligence" and the prominence given to reports of missionaries—not only of the Methodist Church, but likewise of other denominations. Attention was also given to literature, science, domestic economy, and foreign affairs. By 1828 there were in the United States thirty-seven religious periodicals. Book publication also increased to an amazing extent. The Methodist Book Concern, organized in 1789, expanded its facilities in 1820—establishing a branch in Cincinnati—and widened the range of its publications. The firm Harper and Brothers was organized in 1825, followed within a few years by D. Appleton, J. B. Lippincott, and Little, Brown and Company. Sales and reading of books greatly increased.

These developments were aided chiefly by two factors. One was the widened use of whale oil lamps for lighting, increasing the hours for reading. The other was improved mail service. When Washington was inaugurated (1789) there were only seventy-five post offices in the entire country. When Andrew Jackson became president in 1829 post offices numbered 7,600. Although carriage of the mails was still slow—on the better routes being conveyed not more than one hundred miles in twenty-four hours—delivery was made to post offices daily.

To what extent these many surface changes were affecting the moral character of the American people as a whole for the better is impossible to say. That there was a widened interest in moral and social reform seems indisputable. Contrariwise, evidence is abundant of wide prevalence of specific moral evils. Individual use of public funds for speculative purposes was distressingly frequent. Of sixty-seven officials of the federal land office, sixty-four were charged by Henry Clay in 1840 with defalcation. "Hardly an of-

* "The most striking manifestation was the publishing activity of the Methodist Church."—Carl Russell Fish, *The Rise of the Common Man, 1830-50*, p. 49.

† Volume 1, No. 1, New York, Sept. 9, 1826. "Published by N. Bangs and J. Emory, for the Methodist Episcopal Church—B. Badger, late Editor of *Zion's Herald*, Editor." *The Christian Advocate* was preceded by *Zion's Herald*, Boston, January, 1823; *The Wesleyan Journal*, Charleston, S. C., September, 1825; and the *Religious Messenger*, Philadelphia, later in 1825. *The Wesleyan Journal* was merged on March 17, 1827, when the title became *Christian Advocate and Journal*. *Zion's Herald* was merged on Sept. 5, 1828, the name then becoming *Christian Advocate and Journal* and *Zion's Herald*. This continued to be the title until Aug. 30, 1833, when *Zion's Herald* resumed publication in Boston under the auspices of the Boston Wesleyan Association.

ficer refrained from using the public funds in possession to buy the land which was rising in value each day"—selling at an increased price, repaying the government, and retaining the gain for himself.²⁰ Peter Cartwright felt a deep sense of shame at the extent of corruption which he found in the Legislature of Illinois—almost every measure having to be carried "by corrupt bargain and sale." Alfred Brunson declared that selfish policy, "without regard to moral integrity," dominated political practice, and protested strongly against the speculation that characterized the territorial Legislature of Wisconsin during the two years (1840–42) that he was a member.²¹ The extent of consumption of alcoholic liquors was appalling; never had drunkenness been more prevalent. In all sections of the country alcoholism was amazingly common.²² While the code governing sex relations was theoretically strict, actually male incontinence was more or less general among all classes. Divorce however was exceptional.

The spirit of lawlessness was still rife on the frontier, lax enforcement of law imposing slight restraint.²³ Even as late as the early forties the newer sections of Illinois were at times infested by desperado bands that defied the constituted authorities, burned courthouses, and terrorized whole communities.²⁴ Similar conditions existed in Missouri—frontier life presenting hard and cruel features, with lawlessness, vice, and irreligion widely prevalent. In various sections of the western country rowdyism continued to interfere with the holding of Camp Meetings.²⁵ Of the early Illinois Camp Meetings it is said that all who attended were there either to be a part of them or to break them up.²⁶ James B. Finley tells of "the rabble" setting upon the Lebanon District Meetings in Ohio and cutting to pieces "the harness, saddles, bridles and tents of the worshippers." Disturbances became so frequent that in 1839 a Joint Committee of the Erie and Ohio Annual Conferences was appointed to appeal to the Legislature of Ohio for protection against disturbance of meetings—particularly Camp Meetings.²⁷ In northwestern Pennsylvania there were so many and such serious disturbances by disorderly elements of communities that in 1833 Alfred Brunson doubted the advisability "of holding camp meetings any longer." In earlier years it had seemed necessary because of lack of meeting houses; now there were sufficient churches to get along, if necessary, without outdoor gatherings.²⁸

In the later twenties and in the thirties improvement over earlier frontier conditions was shown.²⁹ John Scripps, who had firsthand knowledge of Illinois and Missouri during these years, protested against misrepresentation, insisting that the majority of the people were not immoral, irreligious, and ignorant, and declaring that letters of travelers and others in many cases did not give a true perspective.³⁰

New social and religious problems were emerging during this period.

Among these were certain types of problems created by the character of the increased immigration. Complaint had been growing for years that indigent, crippled, and diseased people were being "dumped on American shores." Incomplete as the records were, evidence is not lacking that there were grounds for concern. Of 1,209 persons admitted in 1836 to Bellevue Hospital, New York City, 982 were aliens. Of 3,000 inmates of the almshouse, three-fourths likewise were immigrants. In Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore conditions were similar.³¹ A succession of potato-crop failures in Scotland resulted in a food crisis in 1836 and public charity provided many—otherwise in danger of starvation—with the means of emigration.³² In Ireland the "disfranchisement act" of 1829 had resulted in the eviction of many peasants from the land and in some cases landlords possessed with a modicum of sympathy provided passage overseas. In other cases Protestants were terrorized by the burning of their buildings, pillaging, and murder—for these were days of persecution—into petitioning the Colonial Department for transportation to America.³³

In addition to those who became public charges immediately, or soon after landing, were others of criminal tendencies—particularly among those coming from some of the countries of continental Europe—who, flocking together in crowded quarters of cities, were mainly instrumental in the turbulence and rioting which was becoming characteristic of the times. When 6,500 immigrants arrived in 1836 at the chief port—that of New York—demand for remedial action of some kind began to be widely voiced. But what to do? No one seemed to know.

A decline of interest in public education had occurred near the close of the eighteenth century and comparatively little advance was in evidence until well into our present period. In Connecticut in 1820, for example—although New England was in advance of other sections of the country in its provision for education—the school system consisted of little more than a number of district schools miserably housed, open for a few weeks winter and summer, taught by untrained teachers. An insistent demand for free universal education was first voiced by the Workingmen's Party in New York City in 1829–30.* The party organ, *Working Man's Advocate*, carried as its chief slogan, "All children are entitled to equal education." From this time on every labor program included equal education as one of its demands. For lack of popular strength of the movement, labor's agitation had little effect.³⁴

The Ordinance of 1787 for the organization of the Northwest Territory had set aside the sixteenth section of each township for the support of public schools within the township. With such specific provision it would seem that

* At the close of the period (1844) only one-half of the children of New England were receiving free education; one-seventh of these of the Middle States; and one-sixth of the West.—*Statistical View of the United States . . . Compendium of the Seventh Census, 1850* (Washington: 1854), pp. 150f.

Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and the Territory of Michigan by this time should have had adequate schools for all. But such was not the case. The pittance which the lands yielded, even when used for the purpose intended; the primitive conditions of frontier life; the dangers and difficulties imposed by conflict with the Indians; the poverty of the settlers combined with the indifference of many of them to education for their children, and the lack of qualified teachers constituted effective hindrances.* Against considerable opposition, Ohio in 1825 passed a law providing for the establishment of a common-school system supported by taxation. A liberal general school law was enacted in the same year in Illinois, against vigorous resistance; and Pennsylvania in 1834 enacted a statute abolishing tuition in public schools.

Despite Jefferson's plan for universal education, promulgated years earlier, Virginia during this period had, other than private schools, only "poor-schools," maintained in the towns by county authorities from a state appropriation, that were held in disrepute by the well-to-do people because of the label of charity borne by them. Children of the rich were educated by family tutors. Conditions much the same prevailed in other southern states. Charity schools—"field-schools," as they were commonly called—in many cases were of doubtful value. William J. Parks, who became one of the most honored of Georgia's ministers, tells in his autobiography of one that he attended, his first school. The teacher was so addicted to drink that he was an object of ridicule by the pupils. One day when he was too drunk to defend himself the boys drove him from the schoolhouse, giving him a beating and smearing him with mud. Finally, after he offered to give the school a treat, they let him go. The treat was a gallon of whisky, which he drank with his pupils.³⁵ The schoolmaster riot was a common occurrence in various parts of the country.³⁶ At the close of the period seven counties in Mississippi were reported to be without a single schoolhouse, and in the older state of Kentucky only one-third of the children between four and fifteen attended schools.³⁷

Beginning about 1835,† public school education had powerful advocates in Horace Mann, Secretary of the Massachusetts School Board (1837–49); Henry Barnard of Connecticut, later the first Secretary of Public Instruction in Rhode Island; and other able leaders.³⁸

* Describing school conditions in Missouri Territory in 1818, John Mason Peck, pioneer Baptist missionary and educator, founder of the Rock Springs Seminary—one of the earliest of the theological seminaries of the Mississippi Valley—wrote: "One specific object, during my excursions through the territory, was to examine into the condition of the schools that existed, and aid the people in procuring a better class of teachers than could generally be found. After having gained correct knowledge by personal inspection in most of the settlements, or by the testimony of reliable persons living in such remote settlements as I could not visit, the conclusion was that at least one-third of the schools were really a public nuisance, and did the people more harm than good; another third about balanced the account, by doing about as much harm as good, and perhaps one-third were advantageous to the community in various degrees."—Rufus Babcock, Ed., *Memoir of John Mason Peck*, pp. 122f.

† In general throughout the nation public taxation for free common schools and the establishment of public high schools did not come until the decade of the fifties. Although Ohio led the way it was not until 1853 that the schools of the state were entirely free.

Academies*—for the most part private institutions—frequently called seminaries, flourished during this period. Primarily fitting schools for the colleges, their courses chiefly classical, they were conducted under various auspices, many being church schools.† Long before this, however, Methodists had prepared the way in the founding of Bethel Academy in Kentucky. At an early Conference west of the Alleghenies, in the home of Richard Master-son, near Lexington, on May 13, 1790, the Conference

fixed a plan for a school, and called it *Bethel* [Academy]; and obtained a subscription of upwards of three hundred pounds, in land and money, towards its establishment.

It was a courageous, pioneering action, and the fact that the Methodists were unable to sustain it permanently detracts not an iota from the glory of the venture. Other early schools, none of which was long-lived, were Ebenezer Academy in Brunswick County, Virginia; Cokesbury School in the Yadkin region, North Carolina; Wesley and Whitefield School in Georgia; and Union Seminary at Uniontown, Pennsylvania. The first permanent Methodist Academy was Wesleyan, in the beginning located at Newmarket, New Hampshire, in 1817; in 1825 relocated at Wilbraham, Massachusetts.³⁹ By 1840 not less than twenty-eight academies, seminaries, and manual training schools had been established under auspices of Methodist Annual Conferences.⁴⁰ As was the case with institutions under other auspices, these represented a wide range in facilities, equipment, faculty, and student enrollment. Following his graduation from Middlebury College, Stephen Olin obtained appointment as teacher in a newly projected Methodist Academy in Abbeville District, South Carolina. Arriving at his destination he inquired of a man whom he found at work, with his coat off and sleeves rolled up, where the school was located.

I was pointed to a log-cabin. I began in it. The door was hung on a couple of sticks, and the windows were miserable; I drew my table to the wall, where I was supplied with light that came in between the logs.⁴¹

With this humble beginning the Tabernacle Academy, as it was named, became a prosperous institution and was officially adopted by the South Carolina Conference as its school.

Under the Methodist system of itinerancy it was impossible for the preachers to conduct schools to the extent that prevailed among Presbyterian ministers in their settled pastorates. In Tennessee, as in other states, many Presbyterian ministers by conducting schools were enabled "not only to secure a

* Incomplete statistics on academies founded during the period 1821-40 in eight of the states, as given by Dexter, show 449 incorporated as compared with 265 for the years 1801-20.—*History of Education in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1911), p. 94.

† The principle of free public education for the children of all the people was not nationally accepted until many years later.

better support . . . but also do something" as teachers.⁴² Despite frequent moves, some wives of Methodist itinerants conducted schools. When her husband was on the Muskingum Circuit, Ohio Conference (1823-24), Mrs. John Stewart conducted a primary school "to assist in meeting expenses"; and again during the 1825-26 Conference year Mrs. Stewart maintained a school in western Virginia, on the Guyandotte Circuit. "While that great Circuit gave us but sixty dollars quarterage . . . she earned eighty dollars . . . and . . . we succeeded in keeping the wolf from the door."⁴³ While in general the Circuit Riders, impelled by missionary passion, considered the extension of their Circuits more important than conducting schools, they were far from being oblivious of the educational needs of the people and earnestly endeavored to combat popular indifference to education.

Despite the increased number of public schools and academies the percentage of illiteracy remained high throughout the period. In the mountain areas illiteracy of the younger generation was practically universal. Among Negroes there was no reason to expect change since practically no schools were open to them.

Increased educational interest was reflected also in the field of higher education. The period was noteworthy for the number of colleges founded. Some of the more notable institutions established during these years were the University of Virginia—founded years earlier by Jefferson—but opened in 1825; Oberlin College, 1833; Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, opened in 1831; Randolph-Macon College, Virginia, college work beginning in 1833; Massachusetts Normal School, the first tax-supported Normal School in America, 1839.

In addition to these, many lesser colleges sprang up, particularly in the South and West. All of the principal denominations were busy founding church-supported colleges. More colleges were founded under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church during the two decades 1820-40 than in any comparable period in the history of the Church. The most widely prevailing motive in the establishment of colleges was to make provision for the education and training of the ministry.⁴⁴

The educational advance was paralleled in the second quarter of the century by a remarkable literary development. More than any other section of the United States, New England possessed a real tradition of intellectual culture. It is not strange therefore that the advance in American literature centered in the New England states. Earliest to attain distinction were New England ministers. Edward Everett, shortly after his ordination as a Unitarian minister, was made professor of Greek at Harvard. In 1820 he became editor of the *North American Review*. John Quincy Adams, hearing him preach in Washington in 1820, described him as "a young man of shining

talents and of illustrious promise," declaring his sermon to be "without comparison the most splendid composition . . . that I ever heard delivered."⁴⁵ Of widest and most far-reaching influence was Ralph Waldo Emerson, eighth in a line of descent of New England ministers, reared "in an atmosphere of hard work, of moral discipline, and . . . of wholesome self-sacrifice."⁴⁶ Resigning from his first (and only) pastorate because of disagreement of his congregation with his conviction that the Lord's Supper was not intended by Christ "to be a permanent sacrament" and should be observed only as "an act of spiritual remembrance," he gave himself to a long life of study, authorship, and lecturing. The simple, luminous quality of his writing gave his essays worldwide circulation. His lectures in villages, towns, and cities throughout the country before rural lyceums, school and college audiences, and learned societies—supplementing the circulation of his books—were profoundly influential upon the religious thought and life of people of all denominations. John Greenleaf Whittier, Henry W. Longfellow, George Bancroft, Theodore Parker, William Ellery Channing, and others of literary genius and intellectual power, contributed to the distinction of the period. Each of these illustrious writers made his own peculiar contribution to the religious climate of the times but no one of them set himself more determinedly to the undermining of the merciless dogmas of New England Calvinism than Oliver Wendell Holmes, unique combination of physician and *litterateur*, whose first volume of poems was published in 1836. Son of Abiel Holmes, noted clergyman, he was by heredity a Calvinist, but his whole soul revolted against the inhumanity of the doctrinal system that had enchained the minds of clergy and laity alike. His shrewdness of characterization and keenness of wit exemplified, for example, in the "Wonderful Onehoss Shay,"* made his oblique attacks even more devastating in effect than the direct onslaughts of Jesse Lee and other Circuit Rider antagonists of the prevailing theological system.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As compared with the preceding half century the years 1820–44 constituted to a marked degree a religious period. Popular interest in religion was stronger than in the earlier years of the Republic, and evangelical Christianity was more in favor with the people. Fewer men of prominence in national life were adherents of Deism. The negative, shallow, flippant type of Rationalism had had its day and already had lost much of its influence. Church attendance was far more general than it had been at the turn of the century and in many quarters had become not only respectable but fashionable.⁴⁷ Thomas L. Douglass, in 1820 Presiding Elder of the Nashville District, Tennessee Con-

* In this poem the sturdy vehicle so perfectly constructed that without defect or need of repair it ran for exactly one hundred years when it fell to pieces in complete collapse was, without question, intended by Holmes to symbolize New England Calvinism.

ference, was impressed by indications that the entire country was about to become Christian, declaring that no longer religion met with anything that could be called open opposition and that many who were not prepared to profess themselves religious nevertheless manifested solicitude "that others should obtain it."⁴⁸ Adam Hodgson, a Liverpool merchant, who journeyed from Maine to Louisiana in 1820-21, while cautious in expressing judgment as to the extent to which vital piety prevailed among the people, was nevertheless much impressed by evidences of the prevalence of external religious observances and particularly by the frequent occurrence of "large congregations listening attentively to unwelcome truths from pastors appointed by their own election, and dependent upon them for support." In east Tennessee he attended "divine service" where the congregation was so numerous that the people were compelled to adjourn from the meeting house into the adjoining woods, having come "from miles in every direction, as in Scotland." He discovered in every part of the United States that he visited "some indications of genuine, influential religious principle."⁴⁹

Organized religion during this period received unsolicited support from an influential quarter—with some churchmen, at least, not altogether welcome. A quarter of a century earlier Federalism, threatened by Jeffersonian liberalism, had relied upon the clergy of the "Standing Order"—and not in vain—for staunch support. Defeated at the polls, conservatism—under the lead of Hamilton—had turned to religion as the force that would turn defeat into victory. His project of a "Christian Constitutional Society" developed at length the thesis that the United States was legally, and in reality, a religious nation in which the Church should be relied upon to aid the state in defense of the existing order. Now, according to the conservative view, the established order was again threatened—this time by Jacksonian democracy. The peril was so great there was danger that "all property" would be abolished.⁵⁰ Salvation could be found, it was declared by numerous Whig leaders, only in re-establishment of belief in the essentially religious character of the State.* The war against the Jacksonian social philosophy and its attempted reforms, intended to win the support of religion by the Whigs, had two lines of attack—one negative, the other positive. The one declared that the doctrine of equal rights is essentially atheistic and therefore seeks the overthrow of religion. "Atheism is a levelling system." The other contended that America had "a national religion, as well as a national government";⁵¹ that the separation of Church and State had been a great mistake—the Churches should be supported by taxation.⁵² With many—particularly those naturally inclined to

* Perhaps the most prominent and influential proponent of this view was Theodore Frelinghuysen, longtime New Jersey Senator, member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and the Boards of the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union.

social conservatism—these arguments had the effect of strengthening organized religion. With others, precisely the opposite effect, leading them to charge the religious forces, including its clerical representatives, with using politics to serve their own selfish ends. Even Martin Van Buren, whose Dutch equanimity was not easily disturbed, was moved to refer to “a class among us easily instigated to meddle in public affairs and seldom free, on such occasions, from a uniform political bias.”⁵³ And Samuel Clesson Allen, in a vein tinged with vinegar, declared, “The clergy as a class have always been ready to come in for a share in the advantages of the privileged classes, and in return for the ease and convenience accorded to them by these classes, to spread their broad mantle over them.”⁵⁴

The labors of the Methodist itinerants continued to be exhausting in travel and preaching, exacting a heavy toll on health and strength. Most of the Annual Conferences had few, if any, Stations,* and Circuits were still long—many of them very long, particularly in the West and Southwest. Alfred Brunson tells of preaching fourteen times and meeting twelve Classes in one week. Nor was this an unusual schedule, since the Erie Circuit, on which he served as junior preacher, had forty-four appointments on the round of four weeks. It necessitated four hundred miles of travel in northeastern Ohio and northwestern Pennsylvania, much of it through dense forest with only bridle paths over rocks and logs, through mud and running water. “No preacher thought of going on wheels to an appointment. . . . When . . . paths forked, our guide-boards were twigs of brush bent in the direction we should go.”⁵⁵ In his autobiography, *Highways and Hedges*, John Stewart gives “the Circuit Plan” of several of his Circuits. That of the Vincennes Circuit, Indiana District, Missouri Conference, which he traveled in 1821–22, supplies a fairly typical example.

This Circuit, it will be noted, required 175 miles of travel each round of three weeks with preaching six days each week—two sermons on Sunday. In addition there were Class Meetings to be held and many pastoral calls to be made. Itineraries of Presiding Elders were even longer than those of pastors. The Green River District in Kentucky to which Thomas A. Morris† was appointed in 1825 was “about one thousand miles round.”⁵⁷ Appointed in 1835 “Missionary to the Indians on the Upper Mississippi” Alfred Brunson was

* The Holston Conference—including two Districts in North Carolina—had within its bounds, according to the testimony of David Sullins, “perhaps not a half-dozen stations.” Athens, Tennessee, was one of the appointments on the Athens Circuit of some twenty preaching places.—*Recollections of an Old Man, Seventy Years in Dixie, 1827–1897* (Bristol, Tenn.: King Printing Co., 1910), p. 27.

† Thomas A. Morris (1794–1874), a native of Kanawha County, Va., was admitted on trial in the Ohio Conference in 1816. His first appointment was the Marietta Circuit. He was made editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* in 1834, and elected to the episcopacy in 1836. He was an able administrator, distinguished as a preacher “for clearness, simplicity, directness, and brevity”; a loyal friend, as a Bishop considerate in his relations with the preachers; modest and reserved in speaking of his religious experience. He suffered much from impaired health during his early ministry and again in his later years. *The Life of Rev. Thomas A. Morris* by John F. Marlay (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Warren, 1875) is well-written, discriminating biography.

PLAN OF VINCENNES CIRCUIT, 1821-22⁵⁶

<i>No. of preach- ing places</i>	<i>Neighborhoods where preaching is held, and places to put up at</i>	<i>Places where preaching is held</i>	<i>Times of holding preaching</i>	<i>Hours of preaching . . .</i>	<i>Distance from one preaching place to another . . .</i>	<i>No. in Society— White and Black . . .</i>
1.	Vincennes, D. Bonner	Court House	Sunday	11	..	15
2.	David Brown's	Barackman's	Sunday	3	5	11
3.	Rest	Rest	Monday
4.	George Garret's	Meeting-House	Tuesday	12	3	12
5.	Thomas Jordan's	Thomas Jordan's	Wednesday	12	3	19
6.	Tevebaugh's*	Solomon Tevebaugh's	Thursday	12	7	25
7.	Captain John Horrel's	School-House	Friday	12	11	21
8.	Hawken's Prairie	John Hawken's	Saturday	12	6	19
9.	Washington	Brother Cosby's or Court House	Sunday	11	3	11
10.	Father Wallace's	Bethel	Sunday	3	3	80
11.	Rest	Rest	Monday
12.	Father Stone's	Father Stone's	Tuesday	12	9	14
13.	Ballow's	School-House	Wednesday	12	9	21
14.	Mt. Pleasant	J. Hatten's	Thursday	12	12	10
15.	Meriday's	Meriday's	Friday	12	13	8
16.	Dutch Settlement	Mire's & Robertson's	Saturday	12	8	24
17.	Owl Prairie	Slenker's	Sunday	12	12	14
18.	Rest	Rest	Monday
19.	Mouth of Eel River	Soalsburry's	Tuesday	12	20	14
20.	Black Creek, Fullen's	School-House	Wednesday	12	20	12
21.	Abraham Miller's	A. Miller's	Thursday	12	10	24
22.	Judge Latshaw or M'Clure's†	Judge Latshaw's or M'Clure's	Friday	12	7	No class.
23.	Bruceville	Richard Posey's	Saturday	12	14	6

Back to Vincennes after three weeks' absence.

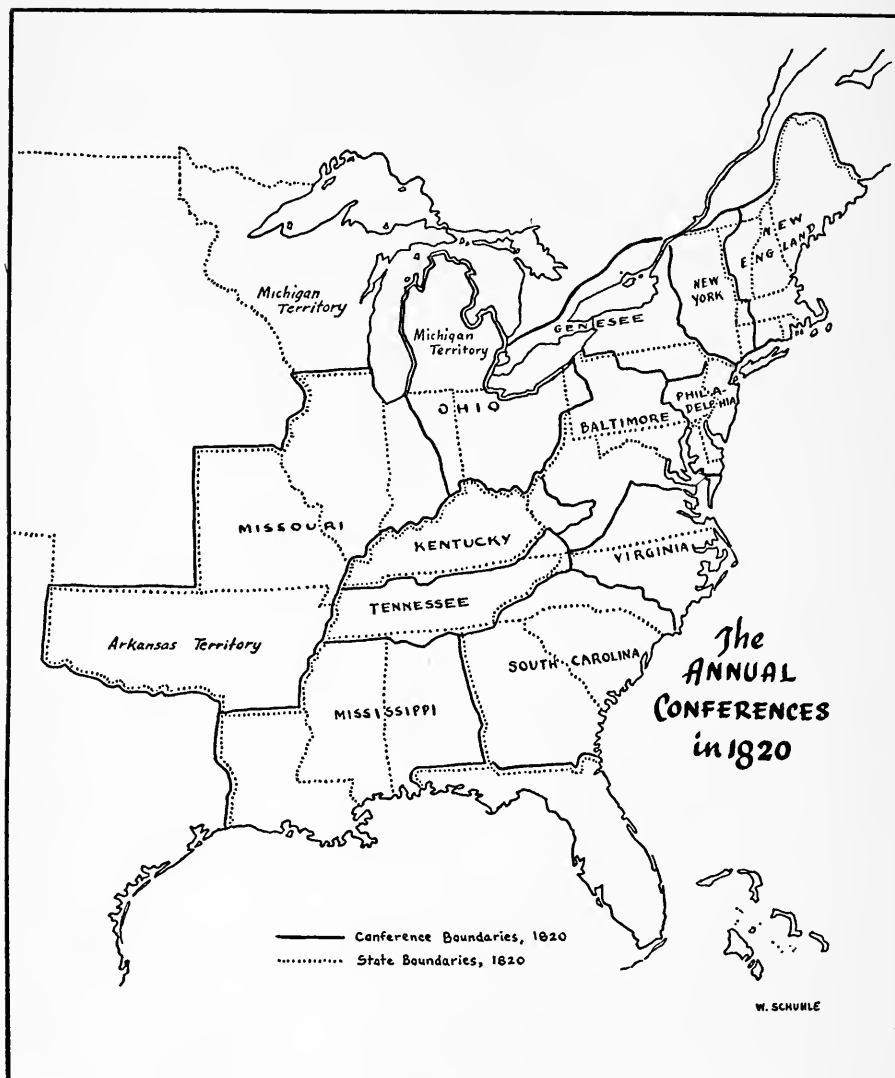
* There is a dispute here where the preaching is to be held; you must fix it.

† If Judge Latshaw should refuse preaching, move it to M'Clure's, p. 105.

given to understand that he must in addition also take charge of the Galena District, Illinois Conference—a District “extending from Rock Island to St. Anthony's Falls, [a distance of] five hundred miles, including all the settlements on both sides of the Mississippi River—and about seventy miles wide.”⁵⁸

GROWTH IN NEW ENGLAND

In 1820 Maine was admitted into the Union as a state, doubtless prompting the appointment of a committee by the New England Conference to inquire into the expediency of forming a new Conference from the eastern part of the New England territory. The report of the committee was favorable and the General Conference of 1824 formed a new Annual Conference to include “all the State of Maine and that part of New Hampshire lying east of the White Hills and north of the waters of the Ossipee Lake.”⁵⁹ At its first session, beginning on July 7, 1825, held at Gardiner, the Maine Conference started out with forty-four Traveling Preachers and 6,970 members.⁶⁰ Its three Districts had thirty-six Circuits, Year by year the Conference area was expanded



and its membership increased. No extraordinary advance was recorded but with one exception each year witnessed some growth,* so that by 1844 the number of Districts had been doubled, the number of Traveling Preachers had multiplied fourfold, and the membership had grown proportionately.†

A further reduction of the area of the New England Conference occurred when, following concurrence by the New York Conference, the New Hampshire and Vermont Conference was formed.‡ The new Conference met for the first time on June 23, 1830, in Barre, Vermont, with 11,637 members reported. At the first session the three Districts were increased to four. The General Conference of 1832 changed the name to the New Hampshire Conference. The ninety-three Traveling Preachers constituted a goodly company of zealous, intrepid men who riding ceaselessly "to and fro in the wilderness" were capable, as Stephen Olin declared, of "setting the woods of New Hampshire and Vermont on fire."⁶¹ For more than a decade the Methodist Church—along with the Baptist and Universalist—had been growing in popular favor aided by the general opposition of the people of New Hampshire to Church support by public taxation, for which Congregationalists had long contended.§ Politically, the strength of this opposition is shown by the fact that from 1816 to 1854 the Federalists or Whigs did not win a single state election and often their vote was only about one-half that of the Democrats. Between 1830 and 1844 the new Conference almost doubled in membership. The Conference year 1842–43 was a time of extensive revivals. However, as happened elsewhere again and again, the effect was not lasting,|| the following year showing a decrease in membership.

Further subdivision of New England territory occurred in 1840 and again in 1844. The General Conference of 1840 divided the New England Conference, taking from it the eastern part of Connecticut, all the state of Rhode Island, and the southeastern section of Massachusetts to constitute the Providence Conference (later the New England Southern).¶ The 1844 General Conference authorized the separation of the New Hampshire and Vermont

* Decrease in membership of 539 was recorded in the Conference year 1835–36. The smallest increase was in the preceding year, 1834–35, only 139; the largest in 1837–38, 2,589.—*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 328, 387, 547.

† The exact number of Traveling Preachers in 1844 was 171; members, 27,400.—*Ibid.*, III, 477.

‡ By a curious inadvertence the *General Conference Journal* of 1828, as printed, carried no authorization for the change of boundaries and the organization of the new Conference. That such action was taken is evidenced by the inclusion of the Conference in the *General Minutes* of 1829 (II, 29f.). Also the Minutes and committee reports of the New England and New York Conferences.—*History of the New Hampshire Conference*, Otis Cole and Oliver S. Baketel, Eds. (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1929), pp. 47f.

§ In 1819 state support of the Congregational Church was abolished by the "Toleration Act."

|| The reported gain in membership in 1842–43 was 5,436. The 1844 Conference reported a membership loss for the year of 3,624 and a total membership of 22,093.—*General Minutes*, III, 366, 486.

¶ At its first session, beginning June 9, 1841, the Providence Conference, with three Districts—Providence, New London, and Sandwich—reported 10,664 members, seventy-eight Traveling Preachers, and 63 Local Preachers.—*Minutes of the Providence . . . Annual Conference for the year 1841*, pp. 4ff.; *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 160ff., 254.

Conference into two Annual Conferences to bear the names of the respective states.*

Notwithstanding its loss of the Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Providence Conference territory the New England Conference made a gradual net growth during this period.† In the city of Boston, where a few decades earlier Methodism had had such difficulty in getting a start, there were in 1844 no less than six well-established churches. In Lynn, there were three, and in Malden, Lowell, Gloucester, and Springfield, two each.

The fateful General Conference of 1844 came to its close almost exactly fifty-five years after Jesse Lee had entered New England. In slightly more than a half century numerical growth had been slow in comparison with other regions of the nation. Altogether the aggregate membership in the five New England states was less than 80,000—only a few thousand more than in the single state of South Carolina and fewer by more than 20,000 than in the new state of Ohio. Nevertheless, New England Methodism had not only become a moral and religious force commanding attention and respect throughout the length and breadth of the northeastern states but also one of the determinative factors in the civic and political life of the nation. Methodism had moreover made its own unique addition to New England's tradition of intellectual culture, contributing to the Church at large a number of men whose ability and erudition enriched its total life.

GROWTH IN THE MIDDLE STATES

The twenties were comparatively lean years for Methodism in the Middle States. In the two quadrenniums preceding the General Conference of 1828 the Philadelphia Conference suffered a decrease of members in three of the eight Conference years.‡ In the other five years gains ranged from 108 members in 1825–26 to 2,800 members in 1827–28. The New York Conference in one year (1823–24) showed a loss of 262; in another (1826–27) its 155 Traveling Preachers could report a net gain of only 659 members; and in only one of the eight years did net gains exceed the two thousand mark.§ The Genesee Conference did somewhat better. An apparent decrease in 1823–24 was accounted for by the setting off of the Upper Canada District. In other years fairly substantial gains were made, totalling a net increase for the period of 8,002 persons.

Whatever the causes of the limited gains, they affected both the cities and the rural districts. New York City gained sixty-four per cent in population

* The Vermont Conference met for its first session on June 18, 1845. Its three Districts—Montpelier, Danville, and Springfield—reported a total membership of 9,076.

† The New England Conference increased from 12,408 in 1830 (following the cutting off of the New Hampshire-Vermont contingent) to 16,100 in 1844.—*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 74; III, 492.

‡ 1821–22, 1822–23, and 1824–25.

§ 2,361 in 1821–22.

in the decade 1820–30, and the volume of business increased proportionately⁶² but up to 1828 the churches recorded only a small yearly increase in each of five years and in two years a loss. At the close of the decade the seven Methodist churches of the city reported a total membership of only 3,955, of which sixty-nine were Negroes.⁶³ For Philadelphia the record of these years was much the same. St. George's Church was an exception, increasing its membership from 1,823 in 1820–21 to 2,780 in 1827–28.

Increased interest in the churches of New York City became manifest in 1828, growing from month to month and culminating in a revival in which hundreds professed conversion. "A large number of butchers and rope-makers, regarded as among the hardest classes of society, were converted"; also many "young men of education and talent, some of whom became ministers of Christ."⁶⁴ Included were John McClintock, Robert Emory, and others who became effective leaders in the work of the Church. Results of the continuing revival were reflected in a membership gain of 998 for the Conference year 1830–31 and in the building of two new churches in the city—Greene Street (later known as Asbury), and Second Street.⁶⁵

By 1828 the Genesee Conference, embracing a major part of the state of New York, had become one of the largest Conferences of the Church. It had nine large Districts and its membership of 31,949 was exceeded only by the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Virginia, and South Carolina Conferences. Only two Conferences, New York and New England, had a larger number of Traveling Preachers. The General Conference of 1828 formed the Oneida Conference taking from Genesee the Oneida, Chenango, Black River, Potsdam, Cayuga, and Susquehanna Districts. Oneida Conference began with more than nineteen thousand lay members and among its ninety-eight Traveling Preachers were a number of men whose names were to have a permanent place in the annals of Methodism—among them John Dempster, George Gary, Isaac Puffer, Alvin Torrey, and Squire Chase.⁶⁶

The year 1832 saw the Troy Conference formed from the northern section of the New York Conference. When it convened in its first session at Troy on August 28, 1833, its four Districts reported a total membership of 18,492.⁶⁷ The zeal and determined spirit with which some of its leaders faced their tasks is typified by an incident related of Truman Seymour. He was appointed to the State Street Church in 1836 following a schism which had reduced the membership of the Society from 555 members to 290. The dissenters had organized a separate Society and built a church in a rapidly growing section of the city. Soon after his appointment Mr. Seymour began a series of revival meetings, which continued for some time with little manifestation of interest. Calling the officers of the Society together he said to them: "If you will stand by me in these meetings and by your presence and

prayers sustain me, we will go on with them and I will lay my bones here but that a victory shall come, but if you will not, I shall close the meetings." The officers promised full cooperation and a revival resulted which continued for three months.⁶⁸ Many successful evangelistic meetings were held during the decade of the thirties within the Annual Conferences of the Middle States. A regular weekly department of the *Christian Advocate and Journal* was devoted to reports of evangelistic meetings and every issue carried accounts of revivals in different areas of the Church—many in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

Five new Annual Conferences were authorized by the General Conference of 1836—up to that time the largest number added by any General Conference. Of these, three—the Black River, Erie, and New Jersey—were in the Middle States. The Black River Conference embraced territory taken from the Oneida Conference. At its first session its four Districts reported a total of 13,232 members.⁶⁹

Erie Conference was split off from the Pittsburgh Conference—its area including the northwest portion of Pennsylvania and the northeast part of Ohio. As originally organized it had four Districts—Ravenna, Meadville, Jamestown, and Erie—and at its first session, held in Meadville, Pennsylvania, beginning August 17, 1836, a membership was reported of 52 Traveling Preachers and 16,249 lay members. Sixteen men were received into full connection, and twenty-one on trial. These admissions, with some transfers, made it possible to appoint 102 preachers to Circuits and Stations.

The New Jersey Conference as formed in 1836 by the separation of three Districts from the Philadelphia Conference—the East Jersey, West Jersey, and Asbury—reported at its first session held in April, 1837, a total membership of 18,260. The Districts were renamed, and increased in number to four—Newark, Patterson, Trenton, and Camden—with fifty-six Circuits and Stations, and three missions.⁷⁰

The Philadelphia Conference, after giving up three Districts to New Jersey, remained one of the five strongest Conferences in the Church, and was surpassed in membership only by Baltimore, Ohio, South Carolina, and Virginia. It convened in its 1837 session with 109 preachers, reporting 35,611 members—27,855 white and 7,756 Negro.⁷¹ Seven years later (1844), the membership had increased to 54,180.⁷²

GROWTH IN THE SOUTH

At this period in some parts of the South—including Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia—interest in religion for a number of years had seemed to be declining. The Virginia Conference at its 1820 session reported 23,756 members—fewer than in 1815, five years earlier.⁷³ But within two years the

tide turned and in 1823 "in almost every part of the state the Spirit was poured out with great power. Many Societies that had lingered for years in a lukewarm condition were quickened into new life and vigor."⁷⁴ By 1830 the membership of the Conference had increased to 39,088, and by the middle of the next decade such expansion had taken place that the Conference in 1836 was divided—the North Carolina Conference* formed by the territory cut off.⁷⁵

The South Carolina Conference, February, 1823, reported 721 fewer members than in December, 1812, a full decade earlier—the white membership 845 less. The loss could not be accounted for by emigration, for the Georgia Indian lands had not been opened and few had emigrated to the West. "The chapter," says George G. Smith, Jr., "is one of the saddest in the history of Methodism in Georgia."⁷⁶ He and Dunwoody assign rapidly increasing prosperity as a principal cause: "the love of money was eating up the Church." Another cause, apparently, was the failure of the Church to keep pace with the general cultural advance. As earlier, most of the preachers were uneducated men. There was only one "classical scholar"—Joseph Travis—among the Methodist preachers in Georgia. The Circuit system no longer met the demands of the people. Circuits were so long that in many cases preachers came only once a month and remained only part of one day. Times were changing but the preachers pursued the same methods as in more primitive days. New churches were not being built; there were no Sunday schools save a few in the larger cities.⁷⁷

But better days were ahead. Camp Meetings seem to have been one important means of turning the tide. In a Camp Meeting held in Ogeechee District in Georgia in 1822 not less than one hundred white and forty colored people professed conversion. Similar reports came from widely separated sections. In Surrey County, Virginia, not less than three hundred persons were brought to the knowledge of God, and at five Camp Meetings in the Baltimore Conference about one hundred and twenty. By 1826–27 a marked change had taken place. Writing to a friend, Stephen Olin says:

You have probably heard of the great revival in Washington, Wilkes county, Georgia. I have never witnessed such a scene before. About one hundred persons are professed converts in that place, and only two or three persons in the town are left unconcerned. This has been a glorious year for many parts of Georgia. What is singular, the subjects of the work are generally the first in their wealth and standing in the community.⁷⁸

A few months later Olin wrote to a "Former Class-mate" stating that in several places the revivals were still progressing and that probably as many

* The first session of the North Carolina Conference as a separate body was held in Greensboro, N. C., in February, 1838 (Horace M. DuBose, *History of Methodism . . .*, p. 388). Substantial growth continued in both Conferences, in 1844 the Virginia Conference reporting 31,217 members and the North Carolina Conference 25,889.—*Gen'l Minutes*, III, 603.

as 3,000 persons had professed conversion within eighteen months—by far the larger number being intelligent and well-to-do citizens.⁷⁹ His statements are confirmed by others.⁸⁰ When the South Carolina Conference met in February, 1828, reports indicated that the increase for the year had been 5,754 white members, and 1,905 Negroes. Membership gains for the year in other southern Conferences, while not so large, indicated healthy growth: Virginia 3,927; Baltimore 2,761; Mississippi 1,904; Holston 1,772.⁸¹

The General Conference of 1828, concluding that the area of the South Carolina Conference was too extensive to be effectively administered by a single body, authorized division. At the session of January, 1830, division was made into the South Carolina Conference and the Georgia Conference—the latter to include all of Georgia, save a portion of the Cherokee country, and all the settled parts of Florida.⁸² Much of the Georgia area was missionary territory, particularly the southwest section of the state, thinly settled, with few roads. In traveling their long Circuits the preachers were subject to many trials and perils—not the least of which was the deadly malaria of the great swamps.* The “liberal marshes,” such as some thirty years later suggested to the imagination of Sidney Lanier the greatness and goodness of God, to the Circuit Rider who had to cross them in all seasons and weathers presented no end of difficulty.⁸³

The removal of the Cherokee beyond the Mississippi in 1836 opened the last of their Georgia land to settlement. There was an immediate rush of settlers into it—attracted by the quality of the land and by the prospect of low-priced homes.⁸⁴ New Circuits were formed and church membership increased rapidly. There were remarkable revivals throughout the state during 1838–39—both in the cities and in rural districts. By 1844, during the fifteen years since it had been set off from South Carolina, the Georgia Conference had increased in number of Traveling Preachers from 85 to 130 and in total membership from 27,552 to 54,067. Now a Methodist church was within reach of every inhabitant of the state.⁸⁵

In the year 1819, when Alabama was admitted into the Union as a state, eleven Methodist itinerants had appointments within its bounds. One, Alexander Talley, had been sent by the South Carolina Conference as “missionary to Alabama Territory”; eight, including the Presiding Elder, were appointees of the Tennessee Conference, Tennessee District; and two came from the Mississippi Conference. In reviewing the statistics of membership of some of the Circuits from year to year, one is impressed with the fluctua-

* Not only in Georgia and Florida but in various other parts of the country the Circuit Riders were plagued by frequent necessity of making their way in all kinds of weather through almost impassable swamps. One of the most realistic descriptions of the difficulties and dangers encountered is the account written by Bishop T. A. Morris of crossing the Black River Swamp in Arkansas in September, 1836.—*Miscellany: Essays, Biographical Sketches, and Notes of Travel*, pp. 263ff.

tions in number. On the Limestone Circuit, for example, in 1822, 403 members were reported; in 1823, 396; in 1824, 600; in 1825, 1,017; in 1826, 775; and in 1832, 652. Anson West in his *History of Methodism in Alabama* suggests that the alternating increases and decreases of membership reflect differences, in successive pastorates, in policy governing administration and discipline; and instability of the populace of the country at that period.⁸⁶ It is noteworthy that 1825—when there was a net increase of 417 white members on the Limestone Circuit—was a year of extraordinary revival and that the next year showed a net decrease of 242 in the white membership. However, over a period of thirteen years (1819–32) substantial growth was recorded. Following authorization for organization by the General Conference of 1832, the Alabama Conference held its first session at Tuscaloosa, December, 1832.*

Later years included some of serious declension. One such was 1836. Spiritual depression and financial stringency prevailed. At the Conference of 1837, thirteen men located—including some of the most able ministers—and only ten were admitted on trial.⁸⁷ The lack of preachers was such that some of the Circuits were not properly supplied. A net decrease in membership of almost three hundred was recorded. Charges were made by some of the ministers of neglect of duty, decline of piety, and increasing conformity to the world. The Church in Alabama, it was felt, was losing in moral influence. In an address to the Conference Bishop T. A. Morris said, "There are plenty of able ministers in the bounds of the Alabama Conference to supply the work fully, if they could be had; but they are attending to their farms and their merchandise."⁸⁸

The decade of the twenties brought extensive changes to Mississippi and in the development taking place, Methodism shared. Lacking two, as many new recruits were admitted to membership in 1830 in the Mississippi Conference as were included in the total membership of the Conference ten years before.† The preachers were predominantly youthful, with "a fair proportion of middle-aged men, but none in the decline of old age." The membership of the Church had increased from 4,147 to 19,255. Two-score long Circuits crisscrossed a vast expanse of country in the three states of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Each year many new settlements were formed. Adam Hodgson describes plantations in northern Alabama in a locality settled less than two years that had within a few miles five schools and four places of worship. The character of the population was changing. In the competitive bidding

* At its first session the Alabama Conference reported a total membership of 8,196 white, and 2,770 colored, on 20 Circuits and Stations and two missions. Forty-nine preachers received appointments.—*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 184f.

† In 1820 a total of 17 Traveling Preachers received appointments. In 1830, 15 were admitted on trial and 63 received appointments.—*Ibid.*, I, 368; II, 112f.

of the public land sales the squatter pioneers were unable to compete with the wealthy planters coming from farther east and many of them were forced to retreat to the less desirable lands, leaving the rich slaveholders in possession of the fertile soils of central Alabama and Mississippi and "the fat alluvium that lined the eastern bank of the Mississippi."⁸⁹

On October 30, 1832, by the "Treaty of Pontotoc," under pressure the Chickasaw Indians relinquished title to all their remaining lands in the northern part of Mississippi, throwing open to settlement an immense tract of desirable agricultural land. From all directions emigrants poured in, the immigration continuing for several years, bringing such an influx of new settlers that at the 1835 session of the Mississippi Conference a new District including three missionary Circuits, called the Chickasaw Mission District, was formed with Robert Alexander in charge. At the close of the first year 488 members were reported, and within the second year the missionary Circuits became self-supporting, appearing in the 1836 *Minutes* under new names designating their geographical location. Growth was aided by appointment of a corps of able ministers.⁹⁰

The final session of the Mississippi Conference for the period (1844) was—in the language of John G. Jones—"unpleasant and humiliating"—complaints being alleged against ten members of the Conference, several of which concerned minor improprieties.* Of the ten, only one preacher was suspended from the ministry; some received an admonitory vote of censure and the character of others was passed without reflection upon their conduct. More than anything else, probably, the procedure illustrated the stern order of discipline applied to ministerial character by the Church.⁹¹

In 1821, when the treaty with Spain, ceding Florida to the United States, was ratified, there were but two towns, St. Augustine and Pensacola, in the entire area. Other than a few small, scattered white settlements the two provinces, East and West Florida, were inhabited only by Indians. The Mississippi Conference was the first to inaugurate religious work in the territory but demands from other missionary areas, nearer at hand, led to its surrendering the entire field in 1826 to the South Carolina Conference, which already had undertaken missionary work in East Florida. When in 1832 the Alabama Conference was organized West Florida was included within its area.

* One of the cases had an amusing aspect. A preacher was charged with having had an altercation with a doctor. The two met on the street and engaged in argument over an account that had been presented by the physician. The preacher, considerably overwrought, said to the doctor: "If you had sworn to your account, you would have sworn to a lie," whereupon the doctor attacked the minister. The preacher returned the attack and soon had his assailant floored. When the doctor finally regained his feet, the preacher exultantly exclaimed: "You're mistaken in your man, sir; I'm a hoss!" In the trial he confessed having been "betrayed for the moment into bad temper, and into the use of language very unbecoming a minister of the gospel," and expressed penitence. His character was passed.

For some years all of Florida continued to be thinly settled, much of it an uncharted wilderness. In 1830, with exception of an area along the northern border, inhabitants averaged fewer than two per square mile. The "trail blazer" for Methodism in East Florida was Joshua N. Glenn, appointed as missionary to St. Augustine at the South Carolina Conference of 1823. Securing passage on the mail boat from St. Mary's, Georgia, he arrived in St. Augustine six weeks after his appointment. Diligent inquiry located but one Methodist—a Mrs. Streeter with whom he arranged to board. However, he found the territorial council chamber available for Protestant services, arranged a regular schedule, and soon succeeded in organizing a Methodist Society. At the 1824 Conference he reported fifty-two members—twelve white and forty Negro.

The stream of migration into Florida steadily increased and this, together with a measure of growth in membership, encouraged the establishment in 1825 of the first Florida District—the Tallahassee. There were, however, many obstacles to rapid progress. After ten years (1835) appointments of the two Florida Districts, now of the Georgia Conference, numbered only eleven Circuit Riders.

The most serious setback in the development of Florida was the long-drawn-out, bitter, vindictive strife between the planters and incoming settlers, and the Seminoles, 1835–42. On every phase of the life of the territory—economic, civic, and religious—it had a serious retarding influence. But in spite of all difficulties Methodism made gradual advance. The General Conference of 1844 created a separate Florida Annual Conference. When it convened in its first session at Tallahassee on February 6, 1845, it had thirty-two Traveling Preachers, four Districts, and thirty-two appointments,* of which ten were missions.⁹²

Louisiana, which had achieved statehood in 1812, by 1820 had 153,407 inhabitants. It had at this time only one District—attached to the Mississippi Conference—with two Circuits, on one of which the Circuit Rider traveled 580 miles on his five weeks' round. At the November, 1820, Conference session a third Circuit was added. The greater part of the people had never so much as seen or heard a Protestant minister. By far the larger proportion of the population were nominally French Catholics but, as in most of the settlements there were no Catholic churches and many had respect for religion, the Methodist Circuit Riders were hospitably received.⁹³ John G. Jones relates that many times French Catholics who would not think of attending a Protestant service piloted him through uninhabited districts and assisted him in other ways. A few, however, did attend his meetings and some even united with the Methodist Church. The first Camp Meeting in Louisiana north

* Members "in Society" totalled 6,874; 4,221 white members and 2,653 Negroes.

of the Red River was held at Allen's Settlement in the northwest part of the state in 1826:

We went prepared to camp out at night, as the weather was warm and there were too many of us to crowd into the little cabins of the new settlers. . . . It was the most primitive camp meeting we ever attended. We tethered our horses out to graze in the daytime, and tied them up to the trees at night. The tents, pulpits, and seats, were of the cheapest [construction] The congregation, of course, was small, the settlement being quite sparse. Each preacher both local and traveling, had to preach at least once.⁹⁴

By 1830 the bottom lands of Louisiana were fast being taken over by cotton planters, migrating from sections of the country east of the Mississippi, who brought with them large numbers of slaves. In other parts of the state, also, population rapidly increased.* Many plantations were of large size and in an attempt to reach as many of the new settlements as possible long Circuits were formed, some extending through two or three counties. From year to year a number of new recruits were added to the ministry—in 1831 twenty were admitted on trial; in 1833, eight; in 1835, fifteen; in 1837, nine—but despite these numerous additions year after year so many men were discontinued or located that the supply of ministers was insufficient and numerous pastoral appointments were either filled by Local Preachers or left unfilled. Louisiana continued to be missionary territory throughout the entire period ending in 1844, supplied principally by young, inexperienced preachers. In 1847 the Mississippi Conference was divided and the Louisiana Conference created.⁹⁵

GROWTH IN THE WEST

Even though the fourth census (1820) placed Ohio fifth among the states in population, conditions in many respects were still primitive. Many of the preaching points were settlers' cabins and schoolhouses—meeting houses not yet having been built.⁹⁶ Of twenty-three preaching places on the Muskingum Circuit in 1823, twenty-one were private homes—the other two being chapels. Of twenty-two on the Marietta Circuit in 1824, eighteen were cabins of members, two were schoolhouses, and two were chapels.⁹⁷ In 1830, a four days' meeting at Rootstown—three miles from Ravenna, Ohio—was held in a barn. There was no suitable private home in the village; the schoolhouse was not large enough; the courthouse was not open to religious meetings, and the only remaining possibility was to make use of the empty barn.⁹⁸ In some western villages the bar-room was the first place to be opened for preaching, the tavern keeper priding himself on maintaining good order. The first sermons in Rising Sun and in New Albany, Indiana, were preached in taverns.⁹⁹ In the

* Between 1820 and 1830 the population increased 62,332; between 1830 and 1840 it increased from 215,739 to 352,411.

spring of 1827 on his journey to the West, Bishop McKendree "reached Washington, Ohio, and put up at a public stable and hotel . . . and that evening . . . [according to appointment] preached in the Bar Room. . . ." ¹⁰⁰ At one point on Joseph Tarkington's first round of the Patoka (Indiana) Circuit there was no regularly designated preaching place. When Tarkington inquired who would open his house for religious services a dead silence ensued. Finally Major Robb arose and said, "Rather than have no preaching in the neighborhood, I will open my house. I have a large bar-room, and there are several sinners at my house. If you accept of what I have you are welcome." The preacher responded by announcing an appointment in two weeks at Major Robb's. ¹⁰¹

The growth of Ohio Methodism was phenomenal. An interesting comparison is in the fact that as in 1820 Ohio had become the fifth state in population, so the Ohio Conference at its eighth session—at Chillicothe on August 8, 1820—reported a total membership of 34,178, ¹⁰² making it the third largest Conference in the Church.* In members it was exceeded only by one of the original six Annual Conferences formed in 1796—the Philadelphia. ¹⁰³

By 1837, with eight colleges in operation, the "Buckeye State" was beginning to rival Massachusetts and Connecticut in intellectual interests and activities. In his remarkable series of readers edited for twenty years, William Holmes McGuffey supplied mental stimulus and moral guidance to uncounted thousands of children and adults. Already in 1835, when appointed to the Columbus District, Jacob Young felt that the Methodist Church, if it was to meet the challenge of a new day, must be incited to increased educational activity. He found the churches of his District filled by large congregations; Class and prayer meetings also well attended, but—as he says—no attention being given "to the good cause of education by our own Church" and "but very little attention . . . to Sabbath schools, or to the missionary cause. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ There is more than slight reason to believe, however, that this broad generalization concerning educational indifference is not well founded. James Gilruth notes that at its session of 1834 the Ohio Conference took four significant actions in support of higher education: (1) adopted the report of its committee on colleges; (2) defeated a resolution "That the preachers who were not prepared to pay their first instalment [on their subscriptions made the preceding year to endow the McKendree professorship in Augusta Col-

* Rapid growth in Church membership was not limited to the Methodist Episcopal Church. John P. Durbin, writing from Cincinnati in 1834, speaks of the fervency and zeal of the "new school" Presbyterian ministers. They are, he says, "penetrating the country, and visiting the settlements with great devotion and zeal. They are literally 'visiting from house to house,' and exhorting and stirring up the people." Contributing to their success, he felt, was their great advantage in education; their possession of seminaries of learning and educational societies for "aiding young men of talent, piety and promise"; their authorship and influence in the press; and their emphasis upon church family life.—*Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1834), 41 (June 6), 163.

lege] pay the intrest & keep the principle [principal] for this year;”* (3) appointed a committee to assist in obtaining a charter, to nominate trustees, and to aid in raising an endowment for a “seminary of learning” in the Detroit District similar to Methodist seminaries in other states; and (4) appointed one of the Conference members to collect funds for the Norwalk Seminary.¹⁰⁵

Rapid increase in strength of the Ohio Conference continued throughout the period. In 1844, with eleven Districts—one of which was the German Missions District—it reported 131 Circuits and Stations; 215 Traveling Preachers; and 70,763 members.¹⁰⁶

In Indiana, Methodism was at first of slower growth than in Ohio. For one reason increase in population in the territory in the earlier years was less rapid. Whereas Ohio when admitted into the Union as a state in 1803 had a population of 41,060, when thirteen years later (1816) Indiana became a state, it had within its bounds only 36,350 people. The first District organized in the new state was formed at the Missouri Conference of 1819, designated the Indiana District, including the Silver Creek, Indian Creek, Blue River, Patoka, and Vincennes Circuits.¹⁰⁷ At the 1820 Conference the District reported 3,508 members, and the number of Circuits was increased from five to eight. Five years later (August, 1825) at the first separate session of the Illinois Conference, in which the work in Indiana had been incorporated, there were two Districts—the Indiana District, reporting 5,030 members, and the Madison District with 4,481 members. At this Conference, for the first time in Indiana, two of the appointments, Madison and Salem, were designated as “stations” and were assigned full-time pastors. The innovation apparently commended itself to the people for within the next six years four additional churches became Stations: Lawrenceburg, Indianapolis, New Albany, and Bloomington. From this time on growth in Indiana was rapid, so rapid in fact that in 1832—the membership of 1825 having more than doubled, increasing from 9,511 to almost 20,000—a separate Indiana Conference was formed by the General Conference of 1832.¹⁰⁸

The Indiana Conference met in its first session at New Albany on October 17, 1832, with a membership of thirty-nine preachers, eighteen of whom were present at the first roll call. Ten men were received on trial and fifty-three preachers were appointed to the forty-one Circuits and Stations of the five Districts.¹⁰⁹

Settlers had been coming into the state in a steadily increasing stream for a number of years. On his way, in 1830, from Vermont to South Carolina by

* Gilruth further reports that the preachers out of their meagre allowances paid this year \$760.75 on their pledges for the year of \$2,500. The *Gen'l Minutes* (II, 289f.) show that of \$6,772.11 necessary “for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers”; and to make up the deficiencies of those who had not received their allowances in full, 26 cents on the dollar was paid to twenty-six specified claimants and others received nothing on their claims.

way of Ohio and Kentucky, Stephen Olin was overtaken by illness and, too weak to travel, was compelled to remain for several weeks at a tavern in the mountains at the point where Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia meet. He was impressed by the continuous procession of emigrants from Virginia and the Carolinas bound for Indiana—as many as thirty or forty wagons, with between one and two hundred persons, in the course of a single day.¹¹⁰ With this rapid increase of population from states strongly Methodist it is not to be wondered at that marked growth of the Church was recorded. Circuits were expanded and many meeting houses were built.* In a single Conference year (1839–40) there was a membership increase of 8,694.¹¹¹ So continuous and rapid was the development that the General Conference of 1844 authorized two Annual Conferences for the state—the Indiana and the North Indiana—the latter to include “the part of the state north of the National Road. . . .”†

Moreover, the period is notable for outstanding leadership of the Conference personnel. More than any other one man, Allen Wiley‡ is credited with having “moulded the character of Indiana Methodism.”¹¹² Well educated, possessed of strong character and balanced judgment, he was a recognized leader in both religious and civic affairs of the state and at one time was offered a professorship of Greek and Latin in Indiana University. Edward R. Ames studied at Ohio University and following his graduation engaged for a time in teaching but soon turned to the ministry.§ His evident ability and qualities of leadership soon made him one of the most influential members of the Conference. Among other vigorous, capable men whose leadership commanded the respect of people throughout the state and added to the prestige of the Church were James Armstrong,|| James Havens, and Charles M. Holliday.

By act of the General Conference of 1820 the Territory of Michigan was included within the Ohio Conference. In 1822 Alfred Brunson—with an associate, Samuel Baker—was appointed to Detroit Circuit, which stretched

* By 1843 the 39 Traveling Preachers of 1832 had increased to 204; the 5 Districts to 16; the 19,853 members to 67,218. The 16 Districts embraced the total area of the state.—*Gen'l Minutes*, III, 411ff., 477.

† Including also all towns to the eastern line of the state immediately on the road, together with Terre Haute in the west. (*G. C. Journals*, II, 94.) The new Conference met in its first session on Oct. 16, 1844. It had 101 Traveling Preachers, 220 Local Preachers, and 27,343 members “in Society.” Appointments were made to eighty Circuits and Stations in eight Districts.—*Gen'l Minutes*, III, 534ff., 603.

‡ Allen Wiley (1789–1848), a native of Frederick County, Va., was received on trial in the Ohio Conference in 1817 and appointed to the Lawrenceburg (Ind.) Circuit. For eleven years he was a Circuit Rider, for fourteen years Presiding Elder, and for five years pastor of large Stations. He was a member of the General Conferences of 1832, 1836, 1840, and 1844. One of the founders of Indiana Asbury University, he was also a trustee of Indiana University.—William B. Sprague, Ed., *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, 569ff.

§ Edward R. Ames (1806–79), a native of Amesville, Adams County, Ohio, was received on trial in the Illinois Conference of 1830. In 1828 he established an academy at Lebanon, St. Clair County, Ill., which later became McKendree College. At the formation of the Indiana Conference in 1832 he became one of its members. He was elected Missionary Secretary for the West in 1840 and was made a Bishop by the General Conference of 1852.

|| For a brief account of the ministry of James Armstrong (1787–1834), see Memoir in the *General Minutes*, II, 344.

through the Michigan country for four hundred miles.¹¹³ Almost twenty years before, in 1804, Nathan Bangs, when a missionary in Upper Canada, had twice preached in the "Council House" in Detroit.¹¹⁴ Five years later William Case, also an Upper Canada missionary, was appointed to "the Detroit Country." In his "Journal" he tells of preaching at Malden, and "to numerous congregations at different . . . [settlements]" that he does not identify by name or location. He says that he formed "the first and only Methodist society in 200 miles," but does not indicate the place. In the intervening years repeated efforts were made by various missionaries to establish Methodism in the region. Gideon Lanning in 1818 reported finding no Methodist Society in Detroit, and on the entire Detroit Circuit only one small Society seven miles distant, and a Class of twenty members at another point, "a grand total of thirty members." Brunson reported in 1822 that the Circuit, "four hundred miles in circumference," had twelve appointments and 130 members.¹¹⁵ One new Society was formed during the year by a group of soldiers at St. Mary's, a military post at the head of the strait.¹¹⁶ At the 1825 session of the Ohio Conference, Detroit District was created—the pastor appointed to Detroit also being designated Presiding Elder.¹¹⁷ The only other appointment in Michigan was Detroit Circuit. Settlements were widely scattered and growth was slow. But by 1830 a daily boat line had been established between Detroit and Buffalo and the population—only 31,639 in 1830—increased during the decade to 212,267. In 1835 a second District, Ann Arbor, was created. The next year (1836) General Conference authorized the organization of the Michigan Conference, including within its boundaries a section of Northern Ohio.¹¹⁸ The General Conference of 1840 changed the boundaries, limiting the Conference to Michigan. In its proportionate increase Methodism, between 1830 and 1840, had more than kept pace with the population growth, the Conference reporting five Districts, seventy-four Traveling Preachers, and 11,407 members.¹¹⁹

Appointments for the Kentucky Conference appear for the first time in the *General Minutes* of 1820–21.¹²⁰ Before the 1820 General Conference the Tennessee and Ohio Conferences both included Circuits in Kentucky. In that year a separate Annual Conference for Kentucky was authorized. It included the Kentucky, Salt River, Green River, Cumberland, and "Kenhawa" Districts. Of the latter District, the Greenbrier and Monroe Circuits were in Virginia, and a small section of Tennessee was served by certain Circuits of the Green River and Cumberland Districts. Thus extending into Virginia on the east and Tennessee on the south it had forty-three Circuits and Stations and a membership of 23,723, of whom 2,859 were Negroes. At its first session, held at Lexington in September, 1821, the Kentucky Conference admitted on trial twenty-one preachers.¹²¹

In the late twenties a strong tide of emigration to Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana set in and when in the thirties it reached its high point thousands of Kentuckians sought new homes in states farther west. The Conference year 1829–30 showed a decrease in white membership of 168 and in 1830–31 of 723 white and 700 colored. In some neighborhoods, Redford records, “the Church was not only depleted, but almost decimated by emigration.”¹²² In 1834–35 the loss of members was 1,925; in the Lexington and Greensburg Districts every charge excepting one reporting net losses, and in the following year still greater decreases. While emigration was the chief cause, it was not the sole reason. In 1832–33, continuing through the following year, extraordinary revivals of religion occurred—Redford asserts “without a parallel in the annals of the past”—characterized by much excitement. Hundreds of people united with the Church,* the ardor and zeal of many of whom was only temporary with the result that they were dropped or expelled from membership.¹²³ During the period of emigration, also, some of the most capable preachers of Kentucky transferred to western Conferences—Peter Akers transferring in 1832 to the Illinois Conference; in 1834 George C. Light, John F. Young, and Thomas Wallace to the Missouri Conference; and in the same year Charles M. Holliday to the Indiana Conference. Despite these handicaps, Methodism in Kentucky greatly increased during this period in strength† and influence.¹²⁴

Among the new Annual Conferences of the 1824–28 quadrennium was the Holston, its three Districts embracing the “Holston country” to which a Circuit Rider had been sent even before the Christmas Conference of 1784. When organized, with forty-one Traveling Preachers, Holston Conference had eighteen Circuits with 13,443 white and 1,491 colored members.¹²⁵ It did not prove to be a rapidly growing Conference. When ten years had passed, at the eleventh session, convened at Knoxville, Tennessee, October 8, 1834, with five Presiding Elders, forty-nine Traveling Preachers were appointed to Circuits and Stations, only eight more, not counting three supplies, than at the first session; and a total membership of 24,037. This same year nine preachers were located. M’Ferrin is at a loss to explain the slow progress, assigning several possible factors, some of which—such as doctrinal controversy (Arminian-Calvinist) and inadequate support of the ministry—were operating equally in other Conferences where rapid growth was taking place. One mentioned, however, was unquestionable—constant emigration from the Holston region to areas farther to the West and to the South.¹²⁶ A substantial gain in membership was registered in 1832–33, followed by much heavier

* For the Conference year 1833–34 a net increase in membership of 4,633 was reported.—*Gen’l Minutes*, II, 213, 275.

† By 1844 the Kentucky Conference had 11 Districts, of which one—the Barbourville—was a Missionary District; 152 Traveling Preachers; and a total membership of 48,739.—*Ibid.*, III, 522f., 603.

loss in 1833-34 and further losses in 1835-36 and 1837-38. But in the Conference year 1838-39 the tide turned and in this and subsequent years large increases in membership were recorded, culminating in 1841-42 in a gain of 8,460 members—slightly less than twenty-eight per cent.* These were years of intense political excitement in the "Holston country" but this did not seem to hinder the Church in its struggle against "the world, the flesh, and the devil."¹²⁷

The decrease in area of the Tennessee Conference in 1820 by the subtraction of Kentucky and in 1824 by the setting off of the widely extended "Holston country" did not weaken the Church in Tennessee.† In fact, it perhaps contributed to its strengthening by making possible more intensive cultivation of the field. From whatever cause, within the period 1824-44 the development of the Church was such that Tennessee became known as the stronghold of Methodism in the South.¹²⁸ One factor of importance was increase of candidates for the ministry. In 1821 twenty-six and in 1822 thirty-nine preachers were admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference.¹²⁹ The mortality rate of candidates on trial, however, was high: of the total of sixty-five, thirteen were not received into full connection.¹³⁰

The General Conference of 1840 authorized the organization of the Memphis Conference. Its area embraced "the richest alluvial sections of the three states of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky."¹³¹ The territory occupied earlier by the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians had been taken over by the United States government and most of the acquired area was included within the boundaries of the Memphis Conference. The acquisition of this territory opened up much land for settlement, and growth of population was rapid. The first session of the Conference opened on November 4, 1840, with five Districts, forty-one pastoral appointments, and 14,492 members. There were sixty-nine Traveling Preachers.¹³² Within the first quadrennium Districts increased to seven, Traveling Preachers to ninety-two, and the membership almost doubled (28,185).

In 1820 the Missouri Conference had only two Districts in Missouri—the Cape Girardeau and the Missouri. But in addition it included a District of four Circuits in Arkansas, and also the Indiana and Illinois Districts. Although still a numerically small Conference, having only 11,773 members,¹³³ it was divided by the General Conference of 1824 into two: the Missouri Conference, to include the state of Missouri; and the Illinois Conference, to include Illinois and Indiana. A joint session of the two Conferences was held,

* The statistics for these years were: 1832-33, gain 1,764; 1833-34, loss 3,238; 1835-36, loss 1,892; 1837-38, loss 79; 1838-39, gain 2,675; 1839-40, gain 2,926; 1840-41, gain 2,180.—R. N. Price, *Holston Methodism* . . . , III, 277, 282, 309, 377, 397.

† Numerical increase of the Tennessee Conference, 1824-44, was: Traveling Preachers from 63 to 127; number of Circuits and Stations, not including the Indian missions, from 31 to 86; members from 13,577 to 39,644.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 455; III, 538f.

beginning on October 23, 1824, at the house of William Padfield in St. Clair County, Illinois. When the session opened on Saturday with Bishops McKendree, Roberts, and Soule in attendance, only eleven preachers were present, but on Monday thirty-three members of the two Conferences answered to their names.¹³⁴

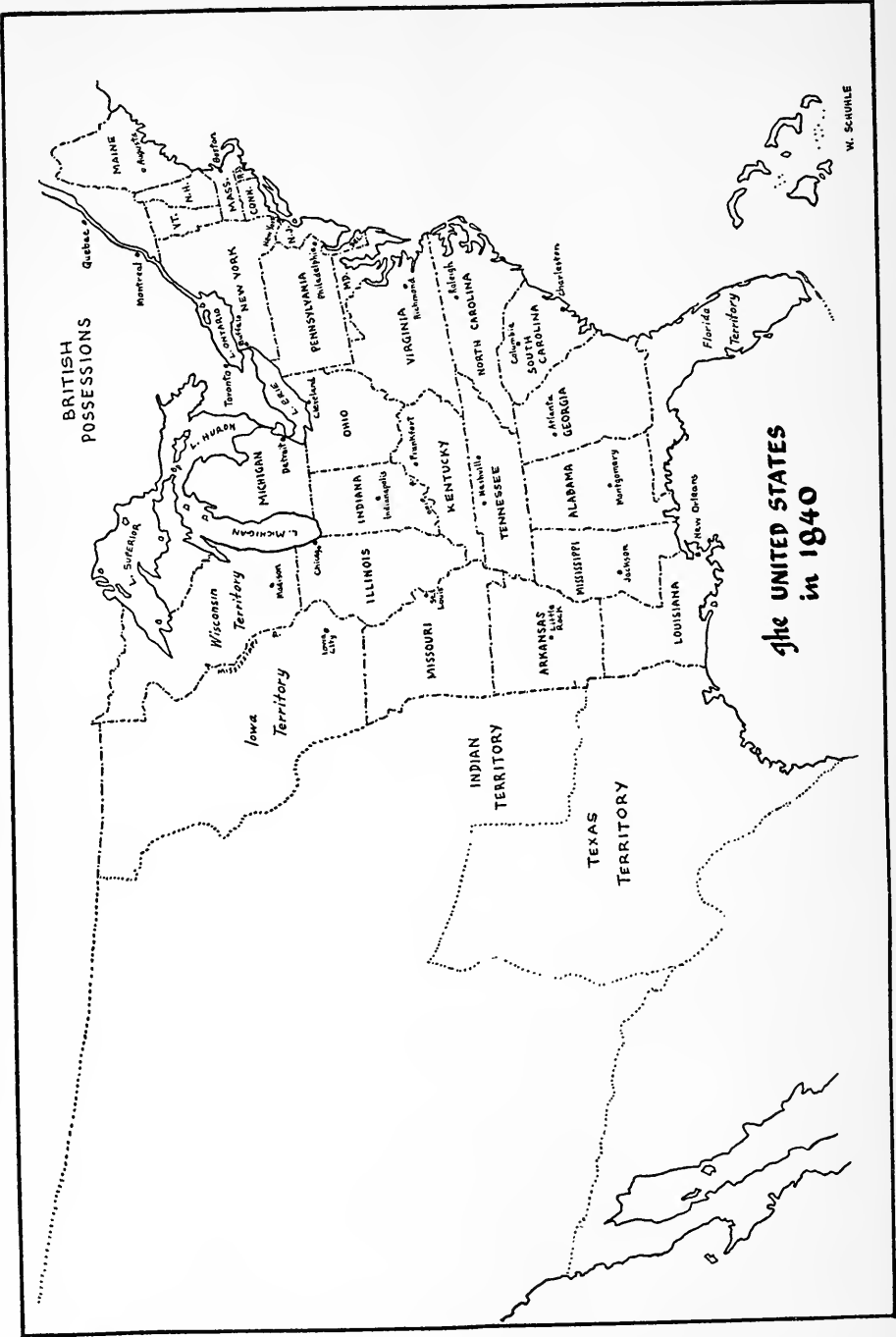
Seventeen years had passed since, at the Western Conference of 1807, Jesse Walker had been given Missouri as his Circuit. During these years, as pioneer, Circuit preacher, and Presiding Elder, he had rooted Methodism so deeply in the soil of the territory that he has ever since been ranked as the principal founder of the Church in that region. With twenty-two preachers appointed to the sixteen Circuits and one Station (St. Louis) he was looking for the opportunity to "break up new ground" and was designated "Missionary to the settlements between the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, and to the Indians in the vicinity of Ft. Clark." At the close of the first year of the separate Conferences the membership of the Missouri Conference was 3,237—of which 416 were in Arkansas—a net loss* for the year of ninety-three.¹³⁵ St. Louis, the one center of any considerable size, had 123 members. Nevertheless, Timothy Flint† expressed surprise at the growing number of religious societies in the new state, of which, he said, "the Methodists are the most numerous."¹³⁶ Ten years later (1835) the Missouri Conference had expanded to include eight Districts—of which two, the Batesville and Little Rock Districts, were in Arkansas; and two were Indian Mission Districts. With sixty-four Traveling Preachers, it had a total membership of 10,960.¹³⁷ The General Conference of 1836 further reduced its territory by authorizing a separate Annual Conference for Arkansas.‡ Nevertheless, by 1844, Missouri Conference was able to report eleven Districts—one of which, the St. Louis, was a German-language District—with 115 Traveling Preachers and 26,225 members.¹³⁸

At the first session of the Illinois Conference (1824) the one District within the state had only nine Circuits and Stations, thirteen Traveling Preachers, and 3,212 members,¹³⁹ but eight years later, when the work in Indiana was set off as a separate Conference, Illinois had five Districts with thirty-

* David R. McAnally accounts for the loss, and subsequent slow growth for several years, chiefly by the shift, when the division into separate Conferences occurred, of many able and experienced men, originally from Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and other southern states, because of their opposition to slavery. When Missouri became a slave state they chose to transfer to Illinois or Indiana.—*History of Methodism in Missouri* . . . , I, 320f.

† Timothy Flint (1780–1840), graduate of Harvard, entered the Congregational ministry in 1802. From 1815 to 1825 he was a missionary in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. Returning to the East, broken in health, he thereafter devoted himself to literature. He wrote numerous books, of which the most widely known are *Recollections of the Last Ten Years* . . . in the Valley of the Mississippi and *The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley* . . .

‡ Methodist work in Arkansas was begun in 1815 by the Tennessee Conference—the Spring River Circuit, included within the Missouri District. When organized in 1836 the Arkansas Conference had 42 Traveling Preachers; 62 Local Preachers; and 4,557 members—of which 2,733 were whites, 599 Negroes, and 1,225 Indians. (*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 434f., 496.) It embraced a part of the Indian Territory and a section of Louisiana.



three Circuits and Stations¹⁴⁰—ten of which were missions—forty-six Traveling Preachers, and 10,318 members.* The opening to purchase of government land in western Illinois in 1835 attracted heavy immigration to the state. Harriet Martineau, renowned English writer, was impressed by the crowds of land speculators whom she saw on the streets of Chicago, circulating from one land auction to another.¹⁴¹ From Princeton, Illinois, Lucien Farnham wrote to the American Home Missionary Society commenting on the great excitement in that region, stating that many were “running to and fro” attempting to borrow money with which to purchase land.¹⁴² Many of the immigrants came from Ohio, others from states farther east. By 1837 in some sections of Ohio very few of the earlier settlers remained, having sold their land holdings in order to migrate to Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa where land could be purchased at much lower prices.¹⁴³

Circuits ranged over a wide extent of territory and the forming of settlements by incoming immigrants created opportunities for increasing the number of preaching appointments. S. R. Beggs† describes the Tazewell Circuit (1830–31) as including twenty-eight appointments—a four weeks’ round, “very laborious,” necessitating more than 300 miles of travel. Appointments included Peoria, Blooming Grove (later Bloomington), and Grand Prairie.¹⁴⁴ The Fox River Mission, opened in 1835, to which William Royal was appointed, also with twenty-eight preaching appointments—almost all in the cabins of settlers—included Pleasant Grove (later Marengo), Aurora, Libertyville, and Dundee, and extended from an appointment on the north branch of the Chicago River, six miles from Chicago, at the eastern end, to one eight miles northeast of Rockford at the western end.¹⁴⁵ The Elgin Circuit, forty miles square, “with thirty-two appointments to be filled every two weeks,” was formed in 1838, embracing “all the country in Illinois between Fox River and the lake [Michigan],” north of a line from St. Charles to Chicago.¹⁴⁶ To it were appointed Hiram W. Frink and Jonathan M. Snow as preachers.¹⁴⁷ With the population steadily increasing, many new Circuits were formed during these years. Indicative of the extent of growth is the fact that thirty-five preachers were admitted on trial at the Conference of 1836–37 and twenty-eight the next year.¹⁴⁸ In 1839, with appointments west of the

* In 1844, at the close of our period, the Illinois Conference with 8 Districts, 94 Traveling Preachers, and 28,729 members, stood eighteenth in size in the list of Methodist Conferences.

† Stephen R. Beggs (1801–96), a native of Virginia, was admitted on trial in the Missouri Conference in 1822. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 393.) In 1825 he was transferred to the Illinois Conference and was appointed to Rushville, Ind. (*Ibid.*, pp. 484, 482.) He was the first Methodist preacher regularly appointed to Chicago (1831)—the preceding year Chicago being merely one of the numerous appointments on Jesse Walker’s “Chicago Mission.” He also preached the first Methodist sermon in Joliet, soon after the town was laid out in June, 1835. He transferred to the Rock River Conference in 1843 and was finally superannuated in 1856, residing until his death in 1896, at Plainfield, Ill. His *Pages from the Early History of the West and Northwest* . . . (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1868) is a work of considerable historical value, particularly in relation to the early history of Methodism in Indiana, Missouri, and Illinois. A sketch of his life and work is given in James Leaton, *History of Methodism in Illinois*, 373ff.

Mississippi in Iowa and in Wisconsin as far north as Green Bay, provision was made for the division of the Conference. The General Conference of 1840 constituted the Rock River Conference, to include that part of Illinois north of the Kankakee and Illinois Rivers and all of the Iowa and Wisconsin Territories.¹⁴⁹ Its first session was held in a log building on the farm of T. S. Hitt—a member of the Conference—adjacent to a camp ground near Mt. Morris, beginning August 26, 1840, Bishop Beverly Waugh presiding. There were eight Districts, including an Indian Mission District, two of which, the Iowa and Burlington, were in the Territory of Iowa and two, Plattville and Milwaukee, in Wisconsin Territory. There were sixty-one Circuits and Stations with seventy-four preachers,* leaving eleven Circuits to be supplied in whole or in part.¹⁵⁰

By provision of the treaty with the Indians marking the close of the Black Hawk War (February, 1833) a strip of land was acquired on the west side of the Mississippi River, known as "Black Hawk Purchase." The area was about fifty miles wide, extending from the Turkey River on the north to the Missouri line on the south. For many years rumor of broad fertile prairies west of the Mississippi, covered with a heavy growth of nutritious grass, had been widely circulated throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania, and the eastern states, and thousands were eagerly awaiting its opening to settlement. Within six months following announcement of the Purchase, white-topped emigrant wagons thronged the main roads of Indiana and Illinois bound for the new land of promise. Before the close of 1833 Iowa's first village, Dubuque—in the vicinity of the "Spanish lead mines," had a population of between four and five hundred people. At the session of the Illinois Conference in September, 1833, Barton H. Randle† and John T. Mitchell were appointed to the "Galena and De Buke mission."¹⁵¹ Randle's first sermon west of the Mississippi was preached on November 6 in the tavern of J. M. Harrison.‡ On the next evening Mitchell preached. Since the Mississippi constituted a formidable barrier between the two parts of the mission, a division of responsibility was agreed upon, Mitchell taking the east bank and Randle the

* Four years later, at the session of 1844—exclusive of the work in Iowa—Rock River Conference, with nine Districts, reported 84 Circuits and Stations, of which 14 were listed as missions; 104 Traveling Preachers and 16,151 members. There were also 205 Local Preachers.—*Gen'l Minutes*, III, 499ff., 603.

† Barton H. Randle (1796–1882), a native of Scriven County, Ga., was converted at the age of sixteen and admitted on trial in the Illinois Conference at the age of thirty-five (September, 1831). He is sometimes referred to as "the father of Iowa Methodism," although he preached in Iowa only one year. In 1834 he was appointed to the Alton (Ill.) Station. He was superannuated in 1845, seriously injured by a stroke of lightning, but lived for many years thereafter—an honored member of the Illinois Conference.

‡ By some historical writers, Randle's discourse is said to have been the first Methodist sermon preached in Iowa territory. (Cf. J. Leaton, *op. cit.*, p. 392.) Peter Cartwright, however, asserts that his son-in-law, William D. R. Trotter, was probably the first Methodist itinerant to cross the Mississippi into the territory—the time, about 1828, and the place the settlement that later became Burlington. There were then only a few cabins, he says, all so small that "not one . . . would hold the people" who came to the meeting. (W. P. Strickland, Ed., *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright* . . . , pp. 302f.)

west. During the winter of 1833-34 he preached regularly in Dubuque and established several appointments in the adjacent region.¹⁵² In the spring, "urged thereto by certain friendly sinners," Randle circulated a subscription paper for a meeting house—"a hewn log house, 20 by 26 feet in the clear." The first Methodist Society in Dubuque—probably, also, the first in Iowa—with twelve members, was organized on May 18, 1834,¹⁵³ and by July 25 the meeting house was raised and the money to pay for it collected.¹⁵⁴

At about the same time Methodism was being planted in southern Iowa. On March 23, 1834, Barton H. Cartwright,* newly licensed to preach by the Presiding Elder of the Quincy District, Illinois Conference, preached in the Flint Hills settlement (later Burlington), Iowa, in the log cabin of Dr. W. R. Ross. He had crossed the Mississippi "with four yoke of oxen, a breaking plow, and a load of provender," and from that time on devoted his energies to breaking prairie for the settlers in the daytime and preaching at night and on Sundays, wherever he could make an appointment. The Rev. J. M. Jamison of the Missouri Conference, who heard Cartwright preach that first summer at Dr. Ross' cabin, has left a vivid description of him:

He was a young man, in vigorous health and of good proportions, dressed in plain linen pants, home-made cotton vest, common shoes without socks, and no coat. . . . His text was Col. 1. 28. . . .¹⁵⁵

Within a few weeks following his first preaching engagement—probably in June, 1834—Cartwright organized the first Methodist Class in the settlement, with Dr. Ross as Class Leader.†

At the 1839 Illinois Conference session, Bishop Thomas A. Morris, against the protest of an objecting cabinet, announced the formation of the Iowa District, Henry Summers, Presiding Elder, with four regular Circuits and five mission Circuits. By this time the prairie wilderness was fast filling up with immigrants, many farmers attracted by reports that in Iowa "corn grew taller than any other place in the world." From almost every state they came, and from across the sea. Two years before Iowa was admitted to the Union, in August, 1844, the Iowa Conference was organized at Iowa City—with three Districts—Dubuque, Burlington, and Des Moines—with twenty-nine Circuits and Stations, thirty-seven Traveling Preachers, and 5,463 members.¹⁵⁶

* Barton H. Cartwright (1810-95), not a relative of Peter Cartwright, was born in Auburn, N. Y. His father was a Baptist preacher. On Dec. 6, 1828, he was converted and at once united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. At the 1834 session of the Illinois Conference he was admitted on trial and appointed to the Knoxville (Ill.) Mission. (*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 296, 298.) In 1844 his membership was transferred to the Rock River Conference.

† Owing to uncertainty as to date of organization of the Flint Hills Class there has been question concerning which Class—Dubuque or Burlington—was the first Methodist organization formed in Iowa.—Cf. Edmund H. Waring, *History of the Iowa Annual Conference* . . . , pp. 27f.; Stephen N. Fellows, *History of the Upper Iowa Conference* . . . , pp. 12, 15.

ORGANIZATION AND EARLY GROWTH OF THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH

On November 2, 1830, ministers and laymen from twelve of the nineteen Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in convention in St. John's Church, Liberty Street, Baltimore, and proceeded to organize the Methodist Protestant Church. One hundred and sixteen delegates, ministers and laymen in equal proportion, had been elected by dissident groups in thirteen Conferences. Of these, eighty-three were present. The Rev. Francis Waters* of Maryland was elected president, receiving forty-five out of the fifty-four ballots cast. The convention was in session until November 22. The constitution as adopted, along with other significant provisions, provided (1) for a General Conference, to meet every seventh year, consisting of an equal number of ministers and laymen to be presided over by a president elected by ballot; (2) for Annual Conferences composed of equal numbers of ministers and laymen, each Conference presided over by a president elected annually; and (3) for Districts, "each District to be divided into Circuits and Stations by its Annual Conference." The Annual Conferences were vested with power "to station the ministers, preachers and missionaries . . . and to prescribe and regulate the mode of stationing the ministers and preachers within the district. . . ." ¹⁵⁷ The first General Conference, convened in Georgetown, D. C., May 6, 1834, reported a total membership of 26,587 in fourteen Annual Conferences. The third General Conference, held in St. John's Church, Baltimore, in May, 1842, with eighty delegates elected of whom fifty-one were present, reported: "stations, 49; circuits, 259; missions, 52; stationed ministers and preachers, 634; unstationed ministers and preachers, 525; members, including ministers and preachers, 55,034; whole number of churches, 421; value of Church property, \$412,225." ¹⁵⁸

It might have been expected with the passing of time, and with the removal of the Church from the direct influence of Wesley, exerted through the men who had received their early training under his immediate tutorage, together with the maturing of the democratic spirit in civic and political life, that the autocratic elements in early American Methodism would have yielded to more democratic principles and practice—the more so because of the increasingly large place of men from the democratic West in the Councils of the Church. Only thirteen of the eighty-nine members of the General Conference of 1812 were delegates from the Western Conference. In addition, probably a

* Francis Waters (1792–1868) was a native of Maryland. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he first studied law, and afterward turned to the ministry. The major portion of his life was devoted to education. Elected to the presidency of Washington College, Chestertown, Md., before he was twenty-six years of age, he was later principal of a private school, of a women's seminary, of the Baltimore High School, and president of Madison College, Uniontown, Pa. "No man in Maryland," declared Matthew Simpson, "stood higher as an educator than did Dr. Waters."—*Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, Matthew Simpson, Ed., p. 902.

few delegates from the Baltimore and Virginia Conferences—both of which included trans-Allegheny areas—might be said to have been typically men of the West. In the General Conference of 1824, which put the quietus on the movement for election of Presiding Elders, in so doing showing itself to be more conservative than that of 1820, there were thirty-eight delegates from the wholly Western Conferences—Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

However, as the years passed, the base of the democratic movement within the Church had broadened. No longer could it be said that election of Presiding Elders was the sole, or even the main, issue. The right of laymen to representation in the General Conference, first brought forward in 1816, had come strongly to the fore. Strangely, this question appears not to have been so much as raised when constitutional provisions were under consideration in 1792, 1796, and 1808.

The anomaly of exclusive clerical control in the Methodist Church is seen in requirements imposed by United States law concerning the holding of Church property. Under the Constitution, ecclesiastical property as such could have no legal existence, making it imperative that the property rights of Churches should be determined and regulated as those of other corporations, under a charter granted by the legislative authority of the state. Although not identical in their terms in the several states, in most cases charters governing local Church property required election of boards of trustees from and by the respective congregations. In the state of New York a law enacted in 1784 rigidly excluded members of the clergy from boards of trustees charged with administration of Church property. Although Methodism had become the most widely disseminated form of religion in the Republic, its practically exclusive clerical control was in strange contrast to those principles of representative self-government which prevailed in the nation.*

The agitation of laymen for representation, during the quadrennium 1816–20, was reenforced by that of many Local Preachers, a large proportion of whom had been itinerants—some of them prominent ministers—who had found it necessary to locate on account of marriage or ill health. Other proponents were prominent laymen a few of whom, as Thomas E. Bond,†

* "No other ecclesiastical body of the New World except the Romanists," wrote Abel Stevens, "had retained thus far an exclusively clerical system of government. Our legislative power, at least, was entirely clerical, and our executive power was substantially so. We were essentially papal in this respect."—*Supplementary History of American Methodism*, p. 56.

† Thomas Emerson Bond, Sr. (1782–1856), a native of Maryland, studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Maryland. He became a distinguished physician and was called to a professorship in the University of Maryland. Early in his life he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and later was licensed as a Local Preacher. He became an active advocate of lay representation on the ground of expediency, a view regarded by those who favored it as a right as practical surrender. After 1824 he became known as a violent anti-reformer. (E. J. Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform* . . . , II, 52, 116ff.) In 1827 he published *An Appeal to the Methodists in Opposition to the Changes Proposed in Their Church Government*; and in 1828, *Narrative and Defence of the Church Authorities*. In 1831–32 he edited in Baltimore the *Itinerant*, a periodical of defence. In 1840 he was elected editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. His editorship of

were active in professional circles. As the General Conference of 1820 drew near, the prospect for decisive democratic reform appeared to be promising. The issues, particularly that of an elective presiding eldership, had been thoroughly discussed in the Annual Conferences and on that issue majority opinion seemed clearly favorable.¹⁵⁹

Bishop McKendree presented the Episcopal Address in a form definitely intended to forestall legislation:

The General Conference of 1808, satisfied with the principles and utility of the system, constituted a delegated Conference, and by constitutional restrictions ratified and perpetuated our system of doctrines and discipline, and the rights and privileges of all the preachers and members; in a word, all the essential parts of the system of government. It is presumed no radical change can be made for the better at present. . . . Among so many, should some, for purposes of profit, or ease, or honor, require, as in the days of old, an injurious change in our well-tried and approved system of government, their misguided wishes, it is hoped, will be overruled by your wisdom and prudence, to whose patronage this invaluable treasure is so confidently committed.¹⁶⁰

McKendree's decisive opinion was that the elective presiding eldership was unconstitutional.* But it was known by the delegates that the three Bishops were not a unit in their views. Bishop George held that the election of Presiding Elders was not contrary to the constitution; Bishop Roberts that the constitution did not prevent an Annual Conference from electing Presiding Elders if it chose to do so and that, while the action would take from the episcopacy some of its power, he was willing to part with it.¹⁶¹

The question was brought up early in the Conference session and was debated at length. On May 19 it was approved in amended form by a vote of sixty-one to twenty-five—more than a two-thirds majority.† Joshua Soule, in the meantime, had been elected Bishop. He later refused consecration on the ground that the Conference had passed an unconstitutional enactment, and presented his resignation. He was held in such high regard, being generally considered the "father of the constitution," that the Conference first granted him extra compensation in amount of \$1,000. for his services as Book Agent in New York, and later, on May 26, voted to suspend for four years the

the *Advocate* greatly enhanced his reputation throughout the Church.—M. Simpson, Ed., *op. cit.*, p. 116.

* It is to be noted that in advancing this opinion, and in his attitude in general, Bishop McKendree strenuously defended the episcopal autocracy against which, with James O'Kelly, he had revolted in 1792.—Cf. Walter Brownlow Posey, *The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest, 1783-1824* (Tuskaloosa: Weatherford Printing Co., 1833), pp. 119f.

† The resolution for an elective presiding eldership was presented by Timothy Merritt of the New England Conference and Beverly Waugh of Maryland. The *Journal* is defective in that it contains no record of presentation of this original resolution. Of twenty-one delegates speaking, thirteen were in favor. Supporters included Nicholas Snethen, Henry B. Bascom, Asa Shinn, George Brown, Nathan Bangs, John Emory, Ezekiel Cooper, and William Ryland. The original resolution was amended, providing that the Bishops should nominate three times the number of Presiding Elders to be elected, out of which number the Conference should elect. The resolution also provided that the Presiding Elders should constitute "the advisory council of the Bishop . . . in stationing the preachers." In this form it was passed.

action previously taken on election of Presiding Elders.¹⁶² This action was not satisfactory to Soule. He insisted on withdrawal and his resignation was finally accepted.*

On the issue of admission of laymen the Conference made a gesture of appeasement by creating the District Conference and providing that Local Preachers should be members. But this half-way measure only fed the flame of revolt. The democratic ferment was working ever more strongly within the Church. Allen Wiley¹⁶³ declared that in Indiana the Church was convulsed with radicalism.† Hundreds of memorials and petitions were prepared for presentation to the General Conference of 1824 by individuals, both laymen and preachers, and endorsed by such official groups as District Conferences, Official Boards of local churches, and Sunday schools, as also by public meetings of the laity.‡ They originated not only in cities and towns but also in obscure rural places, in all sections of the Church. Some were phrased in mild, respectful terms; others were belligerent in tone. The more moderate prayed that the laity might have "equal representation" and urged that the restrictive provisions of the *Discipline* be not considered as binding on the General Conferences other than that of 1808. The more extreme declared that "the people were the source of legislative authority"; dared the Church to try to "expel her own members"; and asserted that the power exerted by the Bishops was to be found "nowhere else but in popes." There is question concerning the extent to which memorials reflected the views of the rank and file of the Traveling Preachers. Many did not seem to be at all sympathetic with or to understand the genius and spirit of the demand for reform. Some, like Alfred Brunson, charged that it was "a wild vagary"; "heresy in the garb of reform"; "a moral disease." Others regarded it less seriously but considered it an unwarranted departure from the Wesleyan tradition. Still others merely disregarded it as unimportant, not of sufficient significance to be worthy of serious attention.¹⁶⁴

The failure of the General Conference of 1820 to elect a Bishop promised to place an all but unbearable burden of administration upon Bishops George

* The determined nature of the conflict is indicated not only by Soule's insistence on resigning but also by the fact that a resolution was presented to the Conference by Daniel Ostrander of the New York Conference and James Smith of Philadelphia, aimed at arresting his ordination as Bishop.—See *G. C. Journals*, I, May 23, 1820, 230.

† "Radicalism" and "radicals" were commonly used as descriptive terms by preachers and laymen in referring to the Reform movement and its exponents. Thus James B. Finley, "The Radical secession had taken place under the administration of my predecessor. . . ." (*Autobiography* . . . , p. 374.) Also, W. W. Bennett, "Several [in the Virginia Conference] were found to be disaffected towards the government of the Church, showing that the spirit of Radicalism, as it was called, was at work." (*Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, p. 714.) Numerous other similar statements might be cited.

‡ There were protests and warnings as well as petitions. In 1823, Ezekiel Cooper, one of the most able and widely respected of all the ministers of Methodism, in a published statement said: "The laity and local brethren are awake to their rights and privileges; they cannot be, by any opiates, lulled to sleep again; nor, by any weapons, be driven from the ground of their claim and demand, as an inalienable right. The sooner it be yielded the better; for, be ye well assured, that a lay delegation must ultimately be adopted, or the cause of itinerancy, and union and peace, will be greatly endangered, if not ruined and destroyed. United we stand, divided we fall."—Quoted by J. R. Williams, *History of the Methodist Protestant Church*, p. 99, from the *Wesleyan Repository*, 1823.

and Roberts. Under these circumstances Bishop McKendree, although so infirm that he was scarcely able to travel or to preside over a Conference, decided he must render such assistance as was within his power. This decision was reenforced by his desire to confront the Annual Conferences with the question of constitutionality of the suspended resolutions. He prepared a lengthy address, stating his objections to the elective presiding eldership, and requested the Conferences to rule upon the question of constitutionality and thereby open the way for action by the General Conference in manner and form conformable—in his opinion—to the constitution.* The result of McKendree's submission of the issue to the Annual Conferences is thus succinctly stated by Paine:

Seven out of twelve . . . declared the resolutions unconstitutional [Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia], but, for the attainment of peace, and in compliance with the wishes of the senior Bishop, gave their consent for their introduction . . . at the next General Conference. . . . The other five Conferences [Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, New England, Genesee] refused to accept the change as a constitutional measure, because they were unwilling to acknowledge the want of power in the General Conference to effect it. . . .¹⁶⁵

When the General Conference of 1824 convened, demand for election of Presiding Elders, and representation of laymen and Local Preachers, was brought forward by many of the members with more insistence than ever before but, despite the fact that it was in accord with the spirit of the times in the civil life of the nation, both measures were even more determinedly resisted.

The fate of the elective presiding eldership had virtually been decided in advance by the action of the seven Annual Conferences, their representatives constituting a majority in General Conference. It was finally sealed when, on May 22, David Young of the Ohio Conference submitted the following:

Whereas a majority of the annual conferences have judged the resolutions making presiding elders elective, and which were passed and then suspended at the last General Conference, unconstitutional; therefore *Resolved*, &c., That the said resolutions are not of authority and shall not be carried into effect.

On May 24 the measure was called up and the resolution was sustained by the narrow margin of sixty-three to sixty-one. The closeness of the vote is itself evidence of the tense situation that prevailed. "So high did the tide of party feeling run," says Tigert, that twice while the resolution was pending the quorum was broken and only restored "by the remonstrances of the

* "From the preachers *collectively* both the General Conference and General Superintendents derive their powers," said the address, "and to the Annual Conferences, jointly, is reserved the power of recommending a change in our constitution. To you, therefore, your Superintendent . . . submits the case. . . . With your recommendation and instructions. . . . the case would commend and establish the constitution, and form an effectual barrier against any future infringement of that bulwark of our rights and liberties."—Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William McKendree*, I, 456f.

chairman" (Roberts) and the appeals of the venerable, deeply beloved Free-born Garrettson.¹⁶⁶ Possibly as a gesture of conciliation, two members of the "constitutionalist" party, Robert Paine and William Capers, introduced a resolution to which the Conference agreed, that the "suspended resolutions" should be considered as unfinished business, "neither to be inserted in the revised form of the Discipline, nor to be carried into operation, before the next General Conference."¹⁶⁷

The issue of lay representation, as a result of clever manipulation, never really came before the General Conference of 1824 for consideration. The memorials were referred to a committee of which Nathan Bangs was chairman. The report of the committee, strangely enough, was not presented until the final day of the session.¹⁶⁸ It was introduced by the statement "that it is inexpedient to recommend a lay delegation." The body of the report was in the form of a "Circular," addressed to the Church at large, and signed by Bishops McKendree, George, and Roberts. It was a complacent and unyielding defense of the existing order, impervious and haughty in tone.¹⁶⁹ The "Circular" stated:

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Several memorials have been brought up to the General Conference proposing . . . 'to admit into the annual conferences a lay delegate from each circuit and station, and into the General Conference an equal delegation of ministers and lay members.' . . . We rejoice to know that the proposed change is not contemplated as a remedy for evils which now exist in some infraction of the rights and privileges of the people, as defined to them by the form of Discipline; but that it is offered, either in anticipation of . . . such evils, or else on a supposition of abstract rights, which, in the opinion of some, should form the basis of our government. . . . But if by 'rights and privileges' it is intended to signify something foreign from the institutions of the Church, as we received them from our fathers, pardon us if we know no such rights—if we do not comprehend such privileges.¹⁷⁰

The report was approved by a vote of sixty-three to sixty-one—a narrow majority of two votes.

Two Bishops were elected at this session of the General Conference. Joshua Soule was nominated by the "Constitutionalists," and elected on the second ballot by a bare majority. On the third ballot Elijah Hedding was elected.¹⁷¹ In both actions—approval of the "Circular" and the election of Bishops—the vote was sectional, the first clear emergence of sectionalism in an action of the General Conference.*

* In the first instance the strength of the opposition to the report of the committee lay in the northern Conferences while the southern delegates were practically a unit in favoring approval. In the episcopal election, Joshua Soule and William Beauchamp were the candidates of the "constitutional" group; Elijah Hedding and John Emory, their opponents. On the first ballot Soule received 64 votes; Beauchamp, 62; Hedding, 61, Emory, 59. On the second ballot Soule received 65 votes. With Soule elected, it became clear that if the northern vote was divided between Emory and Hedding, Beauchamp would be elected. Whereupon, preceding the third ballot, Emory withdrew his name.—See J. J. Tigert, *Constitutional History* . . . , pp. 384f.

Following adjournment of the 1824 General Conference, the struggle shifted to the Annual Conferences. In several Conferences arbitrary measures were resorted to in an effort to uproot the principle of lay representation, prompted doubtless by what seemed to some to be radical subversion of a cherished Church order.* The *Wesleyan Repository*, an organ of the reform movement, had begun publication in 1821, sponsored by a prominent layman, William S. Stockton of Trenton, New Jersey. The editors of the *Methodist Magazine* denied admission to their pages of articles on the principal issues, on the ground that they were "subjects of controversy—which act to disturb the peace and harmony of the church."† Denied the right of expression of their views in the official press, the proponents of reform—while the General Conference of 1824 was still in session—met in convention at Baltimore and established a new periodical, *The Mutual Rights of the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church*. Charged with circulating *Mutual Rights*, sowing dissension, speaking evil of ministers, and similar offences, not less than twelve preachers were tried and expelled from their Annual Conferences. Among these, one of the more prominent was the Rev. Dennis B. Dorsey, expelled from the Baltimore Conference in 1828.¹⁷² Appeal was taken to the General Conference of 1828 and the conviction was sustained. In the meantime the Reformers had been active in behalf of their cause, working through an organization known as the "Associate Methodist Reformers," forming local organizations called "Union Societies," and holding promotional meetings.

Despite the strength of the rising democratic tide in national affairs during the quadrennium 1825–28, it failed to register in the Methodist Church. Early in the session of the General Conference of 1828 the following resolution was moved by William Winans of the Mississippi Conference, seconded by William Capers of South Carolina:

That the resolutions commonly called the suspended resolutions, rendering the presiding elders elective . . . and which were referred to this conference . . . as unfinished business . . . be, and . . . are hereby rescinded and made void.¹⁷³

The motion was promptly carried. The next day Daniel Ostrander and Timothy Merritt attempted to renew the original resolution in slightly altered form but their motion was placed on the table—apparently without debate. Every move of the leaders of "Reform" and of their followers was defeated;

* John Emory, for example, widely recognized as one of the ablest men in the Church, advocated the elective presiding eldership, maintaining that it affected no essential principle of ecclesiastical polity and that it would strengthen, rather than weaken, the episcopacy, but strenuously opposed lay representation on the ground that it would destroy a fundamental principle of Methodist polity, whereby power to make rules and regulations for the Church was vested exclusively in the clergy.—Cf. Robert Emory, *Life of the Rev. John Emory*, pp. 164ff.

† The proposal for lay representation was undoubtedly weakened by association with it of agitation against episcopacy. Another factor was the inexcusable acrimony of the controversy. Abel Stevens declares that "the merits of the question were nearly lost from sight amid the confusion and rancor of partisan leaders."—*Op. cit.*, p. 49.

every petition rejected. So decisive was the defeat that a full quarter of a century was to pass before the issue of lay representation would again be so much as raised.

The victory of reaction was for the Church a costly one. The apologetic resolution of the General Conference of 1828 offered by John Emory, affirming that its action was not intended to deny to minister, or member, of the Methodist Episcopal Church any liberty of speech or the press consistent with moral obligations as Christians and the associate obligations as Methodists¹⁷⁴ was not convincing and availed nothing. The facts were too patent; the intent and effect of the actions taken, too evident. The actions made no new friends for Methodism and they supplied her enemies with increased ammunition. For more than forty years the charge was reiterated that the Methodist Episcopal Church in polity and practice "is in disagreement with the free institutions of the Republic" and its principles irreconcilable with American democracy.¹⁷⁵ Nor, as we have seen, was this all.

The dissident preachers and laymen moved decisively. Within a few months following the 1824 General Conference a convention was held at which the "Associated Methodist Churches" formed a provisional organization. In November, 1830, the provisional organization was made permanent by the adoption of a name—The Methodist Protestant Church—and a constitution. The schism was complete.

In their zeal for change the Reformers undoubtedly went much farther than would have been necessary for the General Conference to go in effective conciliation of the demand for reform. The loss of members to the Methodist Episcopal Church was probably between twenty-five and thirty thousand. The loss in prestige among progressively minded people in some sections of the nation was even more serious. Decrease of membership was registered in most of the Annual Conferences—including Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Holston. Not all who withdrew united with the Methodist Protestant Church. Withdrawals of Traveling and Local Preachers included a considerable number of the most able, energetic, and vital spirits of the denomination.

DOMESTIC MISSIONS

Methodist missions, as the evidence presented in preceding chapters has made abundantly clear, long antedated the organization of the Missionary Society. Its purpose, as has been stated, was not so much to initiate a new movement within the Church as to stimulate renewed zeal and increased efficiency. The advance of Methodism during the period 1784–1819 had been due in no small measure to domestic missionary activities within the Annual Conferences. The willingness of many of the Circuit Riders to forego all as-

surance of regular support, accepting appointments as missionaries and faring forth along wilderness trails in search of widely scattered settlements where no preacher's voice had been heard, was one of the chief factors in the phenomenal growth of the Church. Nevertheless, despite the multiplication of Annual Conferences and in most cases their rapid development, as the third decade of the century began many unchurched settlements yet remained. It was primarily for the purpose of aiding the Annual Conferences in carrying the Gospel to these unreached communities that the Missionary Society was established. Again and again in reports and addresses of the founders mention is made of "destitute" areas. They had particularly in mind areas peopled by impoverished settlers—families so poor that they were unable to contribute even the meagre amount necessary for the support of a Methodist Circuit Rider. They were thinking, however, not merely in material terms. Their concern was even more with spiritual destitution—with people, whatever their outward circumstances, who were without God and without hope in the world. Consequently the Society was equally ready to assist the Conferences in the sending of missionaries to the older settlements where religious indifference was the chief reason for non-support.*

CONFERENCE MISSIONS

Under the impetus of Missionary Society organization Conference missions steadily increased in number, although it was several years before the influence of the Society began to register throughout the whole Church. In the first year of the Society's life, the Conference year 1819–20, appointments to the several types of Conference missions numbered seven; in the second year, 1820–21, nine; the third, 1821–22, sixteen; the fourth, 1822–23, twenty-four; the fifth, 1823–24, twenty-three; the sixth, 1824–25, twenty-eight;

* Of this policy two examples from the early records of the Missionary Society may be cited. The first undertaking of the Society, it will be recalled, was the sending of a missionary to the unevangelized French inhabitants of New Orleans (see pp. 208f., 212). But New Orleans was by no means a virgin field. Numerous attempts had previously been made, first by the Western Conference and later by the Mississippi Conference, to establish a church in that city. The first was in 1805 when, at the Western Conference, Elisha W. Bowman was sent to Louisiana, his appointment reading "Appalousas" (Opelousas). Writing to William Burke, Presiding Elder of the Kentucky District, on Jan. 29, 1806, Bowman said that he went first to New Orleans but, failing to gain a hearing, proceeded to Opelousas on Dec. 17, 1805. Succeeding appointments to New Orleans were: 1811, Miles Harper; 1812, Lewis Hobbs; 1813, William Winans; 1818 Mark Moore; 1819, John Manifee (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 139, 212, 230, 332, 348), all of which had proven unsuccessful. When Ebenezer Brown arrived in the city he found that Manifee had given up the attempt to reach the French population and was engaged in "preaching to an English congregation in the city." (Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 297.) Brown had taken with him "a supply of Bibles and Testaments in French and Spanish, furnished by the American Bible Society; but after a year of fruitless effort he returned to his home Conference," and New Orleans again disappears from the *Minutes*. (William M. Duren, *The Trail of the Circuit Rider* [New Orleans: Chalmer Printing House, 1936], pp. 157f.) The second example, cited by Nathan Bangs, relates to New Brunswick, N. J.: "Our preachers had long preached there occasionally to a feeble few, but under great discouragements. In 1821 the Rev. Charles Pittman was sent there as a missionary under the patronage of the Philadelphia Conference Missionary Society, and again in 1822. . . . His congregation was small, not amounting to more than thirty for some weeks during the first year of his ministry. He and the little flock, however, persevered in the strength of faith and prayer until a revival of religion commenced, which terminated in the conversion of quite a number of souls, so that in . . . February [1823] . . . they numbered about one hundred communicants. From that time the work has steadily advanced, and we have now a flourishing society and a commodious house of worship in that place."—*Op. cit.*, III, 241f.

the seventh, 1825–26, twenty-seven. By this time a well-defined strategy of Conference missionary work had been developed. It was thus stated by Bishop Joshua Soule at the 1825–26 anniversary of the Philadelphia Conference Missionary Society:

When it is ascertained that there is a tract of country lying beyond the limits of our regular itinerant work, with a population sufficient to justify the employment of a missionary, one is selected, the field of his labour is prescribed, his instructions furnished him, and he is sent forth to preach the gospel, raise societies, and form a circuit. Being successful in his enterprise, he returns to the ensuing conference, and reports the result of his mission. The circuit thus formed is embraced in the regular plan of appointments, and supports the ministry in the ordinary way. . . .¹⁷⁶

Initiative in determining that conditions would justify establishing a mission was sometimes taken by the Bishop after conference with the Presiding Elders, and in other instances by formal Annual Conference action. An interesting example of Conference action is found in the *Minutes* of the Illinois Conference of 1829:¹⁷⁷

Resolved that in the opinion of this Conference, it is expedient to establish a Mission the ensuing year, in the Mining District of Country, on & near Fever River on the Upper Mississippi. To be called the *Galena Mission* and the same is hereby declared to be a Missionary station as aforesaid to be attached to the Illinois District. On motion resolved that in the opinion of this conference it is expedient to establish a mission the ensuing year on the rapides of the Illinois River commencing at Sandy Creek settlement, on the above named River and extending up the River including the Vermillion and Fox River settlements, and including all the settlements up s-d River to Chicago on the Lake Michigan and the same is hereby declared to be a Missionary station to be denominated the *Fox River Mission*. On motion resolved that in the opinion of this Conference it is expedient to establish a Mission in the country North and West of Crawfordsville circuit and North of the Vermillion Circuit on the Wabash River to be denominated the *Logan Port Mission* and the same is here by declared to be a Missionary station. The Conference elected P. Cartwright, S. H. Thompson & John Strange as a committee to meet the superintendant to estimate the amount necessary to support the several Missions the ensuing year whereupon Conference adjourned.*

A Conference mission, as a rule, consisted of a single Circuit, or Station, but in a few cases a large area was constituted a Missionary District, usually with a Missionary Superintendent and several missionaries whose operations he supervised. In 1831 the Illinois Conference constituted a "Mission District," Jesse Walker as Superintendent, with three missions—Des Plaines, Chicago, and Galena—and two other Circuits, Fort Clark and Rock Island.¹⁷⁸ At the first session of the Indiana Conference (1832) a new District was designated the "Missionary District," with a Superintendent and five missions: the Upper Wabash Mission; St. Joseph's and South Bend Mission; Kalamazoo

* Similar action was taken by the Illinois Conference in 1830, establishing the Fort Clark Mission, the Grand Prairie Mission, and the Chicago Mission.

Mission; Fort Wayne Mission; and La Porte Mission. So successful were the missionaries in their first year's labors that at the following session of the Conference their field was made one of the regular Districts: the Northwestern District, with five regular Circuits, and four missions, three of which were new.¹⁷⁹ Also in the Mississippi Conference, in 1835, new settlements in the Chickasaw Purchase were formed into the Chickasaw Mission District, with Robert Alexander in charge. The District included three mission Circuits of indefinite boundaries, not an exceptional circumstance since a missionary was expected to include within his Circuit as many new preaching appointments as he could establish.¹⁸⁰ At the second session of the Erie Conference (1837), the Brookville Mission District "was formed from a part of the Meadville District lying west of the Allegheny River."¹⁸¹ Still another example was the Back River Mission District formed in 1839 by the Georgia Conference, with five missions.¹⁸²

The supervision of a Conference mission (or missions), generally devolved upon the Presiding Elder of the District within which the mission was located. In a few cases supervision was entrusted to a committee elected by the Annual Conference.¹⁸³ In the case of a Missionary District the Missionary Superintendent was in direct charge.

The Superintendent was variously designated. At the Illinois Conference of 1831 Jesse Walker* was appointed Superintendent of the Mission District and missionary at Des Plaines. At the South Carolina Conference of 1829, A. Hamill was appointed "Presiding Elder and superintendent of the missions," Columbus District, and William Capers received a like appointment for the Charleston District.¹⁸⁴

In some of the Annual Conferences, at one time or another Conference Missionaries were appointed; in others, Conference Missionary Agents.† At the Kentucky Conference of 1824 George C. Light was given appointment as Conference Missionary, serving for one year. In the Genesee Conference George Gary served in this capacity during the Conference year 1825-26. As a Conference Missionary was free to arrange his own schedule, apparently the

* Jesse Walker (1766-1835) was born in Buckingham County, Va. In 1786 he migrated to North Carolina, thence to eastern Tennessee, and later to the vicinity of Nashville. He was received on trial at the Western Conference of 1802-03 and appointed to Red River Circuit, Tennessee. In 1806 he accompanied William McKendree, then Presiding Elder, on a trip "to spy out Illinois." Later in the same year he was appointed to the Illinois Circuit and the following year to Missouri Circuit. In 1812 he was named Presiding Elder of the Illinois District. During 1816-19 he served as Presiding Elder of the Missouri District, and in the latter year was designated missionary-at-large for Missouri. He organized the first Methodist Class in St. Louis. For a time he was engaged in missionary work among the Potawatomi Indians. (See II, Ch. II.) He was the first Presiding Elder of the Chicago District (1832-33), and was instrumental in building the first Methodist church in Chicago.

† The distinction between a Conference Missionary and a Conference Missionary Agent was blurred. At the Tennessee Conference session in November, 1823, Thomas L. Douglass was appointed a "Conference Missionary and Superintendent of the Indian Missions" (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 428), apparently as the result of a recommendation of the Conference Missionary Committee that a "Conference Missionary" should be appointed "whose duty and business it shall be to travel through the bounds of the Conference, form Missionary Societies . . . collect funds, superintend the Missions and visit those parts of the work which he may deem most important." (Quoted in *Fifth Annual Report, M. S.*, 1823-24, pp. 36f.) While the term used is "Conference Missionary" the description of duties is almost identical with that applied some years later to the duties of the "Conference Missionary Agent."

appointment was sometimes used by way of providing part-time employment, or less strenuous work than was involved in riding a regular Circuit. Beginning in 1821-22, for six consecutive years preceding his death Freeborn Garrettson was appointed Conference Missionary of the New York Conference, "permitted to labour as his strength would admit." Similarly, George Pickering, advanced in age, for eight years (1821-29) served—first as Boston District Missionary and later as New England Conference Missionary. Concerning his appointment as Conference Missionary at the first session of the Maine Conference (1825) Ebenezer F. Newell says, "My health being poor, I received the appointment of Conference Missionary. . . ."¹⁸⁵ This same year his name appears in the list of supernumerary preachers.

It should not be assumed from this that the appointment was always, or even generally, used as an expedient for taking care of partially disabled men. Some of the most vigorous and capable men in the Church at one time or another received appointment as Conference Missionary.*

A large proportion of missions established by Conference Missionaries quickly developed into self-supporting Circuits or Stations. The Tallahassee (Florida) Mission, Georgia Conference, was established in 1825 by Josiah Evans, who served both as missionary and Presiding Elder. He is described as neither a gifted man, nor of polished manners, but a man of courage and given to hard work. Hardly had the town been laid out when missionary work began and so well did Evans lay the foundations that three years later Tallahassee, with 235 white and fifty-two Negro members, was made a Station. In the meantime no less than eight meeting houses had been built in connection with the mission.¹⁸⁶ To the Monroe (Georgia) Mission, George Hill was appointed in 1823. Purchase of Indian lands by the government had opened Monroe County, including at that time the area of a half dozen present counties, to settlement. It was an attractive region, land was given free by the state to immigrants, and soon much of the region was settled. Among the newcomers were many Methodists from the older states. Energetic and capable, within the first year the missionary recruited 322 white and fifty-four Negro members on his Circuit of twenty-four appointments, with the result that in 1824 it became a regular Conference appointment.¹⁸⁷ A second mission begun in 1823, adjoining Monroe on the north, its Circuit ranging through five present counties of the state, was known as the Yellow River Mission. To it Andrew Hamill was appointed. His success in gathering peo-

* Among those who served as Conference Missionaries were: New York Conference, William Phoebus, 1820-21; Freeborn Garrettson, 1821-28; Missouri Conference, Jesse Walker, 1819-24; Mississippi Conference, Ashley Hewitt, 1822-23; Ohio Conference, David Young, 1823-24; Tennessee Conference, Thomas L. Douglass, 1823-24; Kentucky Conference, George C. Light, 1824-25; Maine Conference, Ebenezer F. Newell, 1825-26; Baltimore Conference, Thomas I. Dorsey, 1829-30; Philadelphia Conference, Ezekiel Cooper, 1827-37; Pittsburgh Conference, William Swayze, 1830-36; Georgia Conference, Thomas Darley, 1831-32; New England Conference, George Pickering, 1821-30; John N. Maffitt, 1822-23; Daniel Dorchester, 1827-28; Genesee Conference, George Gary, 1825-26; Virginia Conference, John Early, 1824-27.

ple into Methodist Societies equalled that of Hill, enabling him to report 347 members at the close of the year. Two preachers were appointed to this mission in 1824, and in 1825 it was added to the list of regular Circuits. A third missionary enterprise of 1823 was called the Gwinnett Mission, to which William J. Parks was appointed. It was in a section of hills and mountains, where land was less desirable and settlers' cabins more widely separated. Parks was a zealous young missionary and the people were responsive to his ministry—some walking as many as eight miles to hear him. The round of his Circuit included thirty preaching appointments a month—"the humblest cabins for shelter, the plainest people for hearers, and the hardest fare" for sustenance—but he found compensation in the eagerness of many for the Gospel message. At the end of two years he reported 560 white members and thirty-one colored, and Gwinnett became a regular Circuit.¹⁸⁸ In 1824, Benjamin Ogden, a veteran of the Kentucky Conference, was appointed to the Tennessee Mission, embracing a large part of the area of Jackson's Purchase in both Kentucky and Tennessee. At the close of the year the missionary reported 175 white and five Negro members and, in place of the mission, Clark's River Circuit appeared in the list of appointments.¹⁸⁹ In the year 1830 missionary work was begun along the "several branches of the Gasconade River, and the south waters of the Osage," within the Missouri Conference, designated the Gasconade Mission, William Heath, missionary, a Circuit of 500 miles. At the next session of the Conference, with 104 members enrolled, it became a regular Circuit.¹⁹⁰ At the 1831 session of the Illinois Conference, the South Bend (Ind.) Mission was established, including Elkhart, St. Joseph, and La Porte Counties in the northwest section of the state. Six months later, N. B. Griffith, the missionary in charge, wrote:

I entered upon my mission in Nov., 1831, and have now travelled two quarters. . . . some part of . . . [the Mission] was served in connection with the St. Joseph Mission in 1830 and 1831. It now contains one thousand or more inhabitants, two hundred and thirty Church members, eighty-five of which have been added this year. We have every thing to encourage us. The state of society, civil and religious, is good; and our numbers are daily increasing by emigration and conversions. . . . I think it is probable that nine-tenths of the religious part of the community within our bounds are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We have succeeded in forming a Sunday school in the town of South Bend, and have made it auxiliary to our parent institutions which have four branches. I have collected nearly forty dollars for the purpose of procuring books for their accommodation.¹⁹¹

These striking examples of the development of missions within one or two years into self-supporting Circuits are typical of scores that might be cited—in all regions of the nation, but more particularly in the South and West. But if in many sections growth of the Church was phenomenally rapid, in others—on account of scant population, poverty of the new settlements,

and other difficulties inherent in the various situations—progress was slow and uncertain. In some missions physical obstacles were formidable. At the 1832 session of the Mississippi Conference John G. Jones was assigned to the Lake Bolivar Mission, in addition to appointment as Presiding Elder of the Lake Providence District:

Lake Bolivar Mission was made up of wood choppers, raftsmen, hunters, and a few small planters who were settling on the margin of the river and adjacent lakes and bayous. During the high stage of water we would ascend to the upper part of the mission by steamboat, and then make our way back from house to house and from neighborhood to neighborhood on foot, on horseback, by canoe, skiff, flatboat, or any other water craft that would float downstream. . . . This was indeed a hard mission . . . [but we succeeded in establishing] eight or ten regular preaching places in private houses and formed a number of small societies.¹⁹²

Of a different type were the difficulties encountered during the same Conference year by Stephen R. Beggs in attempting to form a Methodist Society at Fort Dearborn, later Chicago:

I commenced my work here alone, and the prospect seemed gloomy enough. The garrison consisted of two or three frame houses and some huts occupied by the French and Indians. . . . Several families had moved in—father Nobles, with a wife and two daughters, Colonel Richard Hamilton and wife, and Dr. Harmon Irwin . . . with his wife. . . . I remained here preaching nearly seven weeks before I could obtain any accommodations for my family, and then went back to my father-in-law's after Mrs. Beggs. It was [then] the middle of January, 1832.¹⁹³

At the end of the first year Beggs reported ten Church members.¹⁹⁴

One of the conditions hindering the development of many missions into self-supporting Circuits was lack of suitable places of meeting and the inability of the few members in the small, scattered settlements to provide commodious meeting houses. The Craig's Creek Mission, Baltimore Conference, James Watts, missionary, in 1835 included ten preaching appointments on three creeks: Craig's Creek, John's Creek, and Sinking Creek, in three counties of Virginia, yet altogether there were only forty members, thirty-eight white and two colored. On the entire Circuit there was no meeting house of any description. "We labor under great inconvenience," wrote the missionary, "for want of suitable places to hold meetings. . . . We are obliged to have . . . [them] in private houses, and many of them small. . . ." ¹⁹⁵

Another hindrance was the ingrown sectarianism of the people in many frontier communities. The two missionaries appointed in 1833 to the Cambria Mission, embracing a mountainous section of Somerset, Cambria, and Indiana Counties, Pennsylvania, reported the sparse population as composed of "almost all the religious sects which Germany and America have produced." Establishing nine preaching places, they had been able during the first few months to form "only five small classes." W. D. R. Trotter, ap-

pointed to the Henderson River Mission, Illinois Conference, in 1833, likewise reported that a large proportion of the adult population—"two-thirds perhaps"—was religious, claiming Baptist, Presbyterian, "Campbellite," Unitarian, or Methodist affiliation, but slow to unite in a common fellowship under Methodist auspices, only twenty having been "received into the Church" in the several months "since the first report."¹⁹⁶

In some sections of the country Indian hostilities were a continuing handicap, seriously threatening safety and security of the settlers. Appointed at the 1831 session of the Illinois Conference to the Fort Clark Mission on the Illinois River, "embracing all of Putnam County and part of La Salle County," on arrival William Royal found five organized Classes and within a few months had recruited about fifty new members:

the probability was that this mission would have formed a circuit the ensuing year, sufficient to support one single man, had it not been for the rupture which has recently occurred . . . [with] the Indians. . . many of the citizens . . . have been constrained to fly for security to other parts, till near one half of the mission is now evacuated. I have also found it necessary to move my family back to . . . Sangamon county, but intend still to remain here myself . . . as long as practicable. . . .¹⁹⁷

The greatest obstacles to missionary progress grew out of an insufficient supply of ministers, and the small proportion of preachers available for service as missionaries. Pleas came constantly to the Bishops, the Missionary Society, and in letters to the *Christian Advocate*—similar to the following from northwest Illinois—from many sections of the South, the Southwest, and the West:

We need missionary assistance very much here . . . there are now [1831] four organized counties destitute of preaching by . . . circuit preachers . . . neither do I know of any official members excepting one [local] preacher and one exhorter both in the county of Knox.¹⁹⁸

Efforts of the Circuit Riders, in many instances, were spread over such an immense area that contacts with the people could not be other than superficial. St. Mary's Mission was undertaken in 1828 among the scattered population of "a very thinly inhabited region" comprehending parts of three counties in northwest Ohio. The Kentucky Mission, established in 1834 at the headwaters of the Kentucky River, embraced the principal parts of Clay and Perry Counties and a part of Estill County, with twenty-five preaching places. To make the round of the Circuit, the missionary stated, required six weeks' travel. The Dahlonga Mission (1838) included all of Lumpkin, White, and parts of Cherokee and Forsythe Counties, Georgia. The Rock Island Mission (1832) was spread over four Illinois counties, with thirteen preaching places.¹⁹⁹ Many other similar cases may be cited. Under conditions such as these the cultivation of the field could scarcely be expected to be anything

more than surface culture. Added to this was the fact that many of the missionaries were young, inexperienced, and frequently unordained men.²⁰⁰ While most of them possessed gifts, grace, deep devotion, and sterling character, occasionally one was received on trial, or even passed the tests required for admission into full connection, who proved unworthy of the confidence reposed in him by the Annual Conference.*

The continuance of certain Circuits year after year as missions, before many years had passed raised question in Annual Conferences whether they were justly more entitled to assistance from the Missionary Society than some other Circuits not so classified. So insistent did the question become that the General Conference of 1836, in order that none able to become self-supporting should be kept on the missionary list, directed:

each Annual Conference to examine strictly into the state of the domestic missions within its bounds, and to allow none to remain on the list of its missions which in the judgement of the Conference is able to support itself.²⁰¹

Although by no means limited to new sections of the nation, by far the larger number of Conference missions were on the frontier. In the Conference year 1835-36 the Illinois Conference had twenty-one missions supplied by twenty-one missionaries; the Ohio Conference, which in that year had two Districts in Michigan, had fifteen missions with nineteen missionaries; and the South Carolina Conference, twelve missions with twelve missionaries. But the Philadelphia Conference, in a long-settled section of the country, had six missions; Baltimore Conference had two; Virginia and New England, one each.†

Almost all Conference missions were in rural sections, but toward the later part of the period acute moral and religious problems developed in the cities. Probably the first distinctively city mission was that known as the "York and Long Island Mission," established by the New York Conference to "attempt a reformation of the many prostitutes of the city." It was short-lived. Before the end of the first year Samuel D. Ferguson, appointed as missionary, became discouraged with his lack of success and directed his attention to a different segment of the city's population.²⁰² At the New York Conference of 1831

* Two such were John Wood, the first missionary appointed to St. Mary's Mission, Ohio Conference (Nathan Bangs, *An Authentic History* . . . , pp. 233f.), and Philip T. Cordier, appointed to the Rock Island Mission, Illinois Conference, of whom Peter Cartwright wrote: "He was a man of feeble talents, unstable, and did but little good. He was finally expelled."—*Op. cit.*, p. 333.

† The total of Conference missions for 1835-36 was 109; missionaries, 110. At the close of the period Conference missions numbered about 122. To supply an accurate, complete list of Conference missions for the period 1819-44 after a lapse of more than a century, is impossible. As elsewhere stated (pp. 284f.) the Missionary Society was not kept informed of all missionary appointments. Hence the Annual Reports of the Missionary Society are not an adequate source of information. The contemporary history written by Nathan Bangs, *Authentic History of Missions* . . . , also is incomplete. The original Minutes of some of the Annual Conferences for some or all of the years of the period are no longer in existence. The *General Minutes* are defective in that some missionary appointments are not recorded as such. Conference histories contain accounts of some missions concerning which primary sources are lacking but it is not to be presumed that they include all, and many that are included receive only the barest possible mention.

Richard Seaman was appointed to the Harlem (New York City) Mission. He was a doctor, at one time "resident physician at the Almshouse." In 1823 he had resigned a large and remunerative practice, had been received on trial in New York Conference, and during the intervening years had served several Circuits in and about New York City. In 1830 a mission was established to minister to the scattered population of the north part of York Island (later Manhattan), then including all above "Bowery Village" and "Upper Greenwich." Dr. Seaman's appointment marked the beginning of an intimate relationship maintained to the end of his life. Of him it was said that he gave "his life and his property to the cause of God in that region."²⁰³

The Mariners' Bethels established in several eastern seaport cities represented a distinctive type of city mission. The first of these was the Mariners' Church of New York, an outgrowth of the activities of a group of young men of the city who interested themselves in the moral and religious welfare of seamen. They organized the New York Port Society, forming a corporation under authorization of a special act of the Legislature, and engaged the Rev. Ward Stafford, a Presbyterian clergyman, as minister. His first sermon was preached on December 20, 1816, in a schoolroom. Ground was purchased in 1819 and the Mariners' Church was erected. Stafford was succeeded in March, 1821, by Henry Chase* who at the New York Conference of 1825 was given a regular pastoral appointment, and for twenty-five years was annually reappointed to the Mariners' Church†—preaching, conducting a weekly prayer meeting for sailors, distributing tracts among seamen, visiting their families and in other ways rendering a much needed service to an otherwise religiously neglected class of people. In 1844 the Mariners' Methodist Episcopal Church was built.²⁰⁴

The Sailors' City Bethel, Light Street Wharf, Baltimore, was organized in an old sailing vessel. It first appears in the *General Minutes* of 1836-37 as the Seaman's Union Bethel, John Smith, pastor, who was reappointed annually up to and including the Conference year 1838-39. The mission then disappeared for a time from the list of appointments. In this same year a second mission for sailors, the "Seamens' Bethel," was established in the newly organized North Baltimore District with John Smith in charge. This mission was incorporated as the Seamen's Union Bethel Society under an interdenominational Board, but the Baltimore Conference for years included it within its appointments.²⁰⁵

* Henry Chase (1790-1853) resigned as teacher in the Wesleyan Seminary in New York that he might devote himself wholly to ministry to seamen. He was received on trial in the New York Conference in 1825, and in 1827 was admitted into full connection. His last appointment was that of 1851. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 465ff., 529f.; IV, 452.) His life was one of unremitting and faithful labor. His sympathy and affection for the seamen were such, said Dr. David M. Reese, that "no sailor . . . who had worshipped at the Mariners' Church . . . would ever pass him in the street without doffing his hat—whether drunk or sober."—W. B. Sprague, *op. cit.*, VII, 475ff.

† By authority of General Conference, preachers laboring for the spiritual good of seamen were exempted from the rule limiting pastoral tenure to two years.—*G. C. Journals*, I, 317.

The Mariners' Bethel in Philadelphia was organized by a group of young men whose interest in seamen seems to have been first stimulated by Edward T. Taylor of Boston in a visit made to the city in 1831, during which he preached not only in several churches but also "on the decks of vessels" in Philadelphia harbor. The "initiatory sermon" of the mission was preached on a Sunday afternoon on the wharf in Southwark, south of South Street—"the retreat of inebriates on Sunday"—by George C. Cookman, pastor of St. George's Methodist Church. The mission is first referred to in the 1834 *General Minutes* as Southwark Mission, D. W. Bartine in charge. Beginning in 1839 it was designated as the Mariners' Bethel Mission. In 1844 a brick church was erected. Lednum says that the Society had "as much, if not more, of the primitive spirit of Methodism as any . . ." in the city of Philadelphia.²⁰⁶

Most widely known of all was the Mariners' Bethel, North Square, Boston, to which Edward T. Taylor was appointed by the New England Conference of 1829—the one preacher Charles Dickens went to hear on his first visit to America.²⁰⁷ Under his long and inimitable ministry, continued until his death in 1871, its fame spread to the very ends of the earth. Taylor had gone to sea as a cabin boy at about seven years of age in response to the invitation of the captain of a sailing vessel—"Come along with me, boy, and be a sailor"—and when, after ten years, he landed in Boston he knew all there was to be known about a sailor's life. It was not therefore strange that when the Methodists of Boston began to feel a moving concern for those "who go down to the sea in ships" they should turn to Edward Taylor as their chosen evangelist. And what an evangelist he became! It would be difficult to give a more apt characterization of the effect of his ministry than that of the sailor—one of two who, not sure of the location of the mission, stopped inquiringly before its door one Sunday morning and attempted stumblingly to spell out the name: "'B-e-t,' that's *beat*; 'h-e-l,' that's *hell*; all right, Jack, come along, this is where the old man beats hell, let's go right in!"

MISSIONS TO NEGROES

The South Carolina Conference of 1808 opened on Monday, December 26, in the home of "brother [John] Bush," in Green County, Georgia. Both Asbury and McKendree were present, having traveled together through Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina, "riding in a poor thirty-dollar chaise, in partnership."²⁰⁸ It was McKendree's first visit to the South Carolina Conference. In his *Journal* Asbury records:

We appointed three missionaries—one for Tombigbee [M. P. Sturdevant], one to Ashley and Savannah, and the country between [James H. Mellard], and one to labour between Santee and Cooper Rivers [James E. Glenn].

McKendree's statement concerning the appointments agrees, but with this

significant addition: "Here was the beginning of the missions to the slaves in South Carolina."²⁰⁹

Doubtless these appointments were the first designation, by formal Conference action, of missionaries to the slaves, but Methodist missionary interest in religious work among slaves long antedated these appointments. The *General Minutes* for 1786—the first to give statistics of both white and Negro membership—report 18,791 white and 1,890 colored members, of whom 1,000 were stated to be in Antigua, West Indies. The figure for Negroes was probably an understatement, for the next year the number was almost twice as large (3,893), and in 1788, 6,545 Negro members were reported.²¹⁰ It is evident, with more than six thousand Negroes enrolled as Church members within the first three years of the Church's life, that at least some of the Circuit Riders and Local Preachers were giving more than casual attention to ministry to the slaves. The Baltimore Conference of 1787 charged the preachers to labor diligently among the slaves:

Quest. 17. *What directions shall we give for the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the coloured people?*

Ans. We conjure all our Ministers and Preachers, by the love of God, and the salvation of souls, and do require them, by all the authority that is invested in us, to leave nothing undone for the spiritual benefit and salvation of them, within their respective circuits, or districts; and for this purpose to embrace every opportunity of inquiring into the state of their souls, and to unite in society those who appear to have a real desire of fleeing from the wrath to come, to meet such in class, and to exercise the whole methodist discipline among them.²¹¹

In 1808, when the first stated missions were established, the South Carolina Conference alone reported 5,111 Negro members, and the Church as a whole 30,308.²¹²

But even with this record Asbury could not be complacent: "these are the poor; these are the people we are more immediately called to preach to," was his continuing burden of soul.²¹³ Unfortunately, not all of the preachers were of his spirit. Many of them were timid and fearful—frightened lest systematic cultivation of the work among the slaves would incite overt opposition from slaveholders. The General Conference of 1800, in order that Negro preachers might be fully qualified for their ministry, had authorized their ordination as deacons* but the minority opposition urged that the authorization be not printed in the *Discipline* and a vote was passed "to enter it on the journals only," with the result that it did not become generally known throughout the Church.²¹⁴ Very few were ordained.

* The General Conference action read: "The bishops have obtained leave by the suffrages of this General Conference, to ordain local deacons of our African brethren, in places where they have built a house or houses for the worship of God; *provided*, they have a person among them qualified for that office, and he can obtain an election of two-thirds of the male members of the society to which he belongs, and a recommendation from the minister who has the charge, and his fellow-labourers in the city or circuit."—*G. C. Journals*, I, 44.

Full two decades passed, following the appointments of 1808, before extensive efforts were made to establish missions to slaves. In 1828 Charles Baring and Lewis Morris, two large plantation owners in the Charleston District, and the Hon. Charles C. Pinckney, owner of an extensive plantation on the Santee River in the Columbia District—all three members of the Protestant Episcopal Church—united in an appeal to William Capers* for missionaries to be sent by the South Carolina Conference to their plantations. In a report made some years later the Society thus described the conditions for which the Conference implored missionary assistance:

[In extensive areas] the moral and religious destitution [of the slaves] was utter. They had no gospel among them, and many of the oldest negroes had never in all their lives heard a sermon preached. Without our missionaries, and the benefits derived from their labours, they would at this day, in all probability, have been as destitute of Christian instruction as the inhabitants of the most benighted heathen country.²¹⁵

At the 1829 session of the South Carolina Conference three missions were established: mission on Savannah and Broad Rivers, James Dannelly; mission south of Ashley River, John Honour; mission on Santee and Pee Dee Rivers, John H. Massey. William Capers was appointed Superintendent of the missions.²¹⁶ This marked the beginning of extensive missions to Negroes—particularly in the South Carolina and Georgia Conferences, although some were established in the Tennessee, Memphis, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, and Virginia Conferences. In the South Carolina Conference in 1833 there were five missions; in 1834, six; in 1835, eight; in 1836, nine; in 1837, ten; in 1844, sixteen. *The Nineteenth Annual Report of the Missionary Society* (1837–38) stated that the Society was supporting nineteen missionaries laboring for the benefit of the slave population. For the Conference year 1843–44, as computed from the *General Minutes*, there were fifty-nine missions with fifty-four missionaries.† Members reported by the missions to the 1844 Conferences numbered 18,182.²¹⁷

The attitude of the plantation owners toward missions for the slaves as a rule was favorable. In one instance the Missionary Society reported that several wealthy South Carolina planters “had become so impressed with the duty of furnishing their slaves with Christian instruction” as not only to ask for a missionary but also to pledge full support of the mission. Some planters built chapels on their plantations, and some regularly attended religious serv-

* William Capers' known long-time interest in the religious welfare of the Negro population was doubtless the reason for addressing the appeal to him. This interest continued to the end of his life. He personally prepared two catechisms for religious instruction of Negro converts. One side of the shaft which marks his grave bears the inscription: “The Founder of Missions to the Slaves in South Carolina.”—William M. Wightman, *Life of William Capers*, pp. 291f., 490.

† Statistics as cited by W. P. Harrison for 1844 vary somewhat, viz.: missions, 68; missionaries, 80; members, 22,063. The amount appropriated in 1844 for the support of the work by the several Conferences, according to Harrison, was \$22,378.35.—*Gospel Among the Slaves* . . . , p. 195.

ices with their slaves.²¹⁸ A Tennessee missionary reported that support was expected by the Tennessee Conference, and that the Conference was "not disposed to encourage . . . [establishment of] Missions unless the expenses are paid by the owners of the slaves." He adds, "This seems to be right."²¹⁹

The Georgia Conference, in its 1832 session, adopted a resolution declaring it to be the duty of the missionary to the slaves

to consider them his special charge, to collect them into societies and divide them into classes wherever it is practicable; that he should carefully instruct them in the doctrines of Christianity and bring them under the discipline of the Church, as in the case of all other members.²²⁰

Missionary service, in addition to preaching and pastoral visiting in the homes, seems to have conformed to this general pattern. Special attention apparently was given to catechising the children. The missionary on the Savannah River Mission, Georgia Conference, in 1835, thus described his service:

The work . . . embraces [nine] plantations. . . . I visit each plantation every week, catechize orally 165 children, divided into 9 classes, and pray with the old and sick, in their houses or hospitals. . . . on each plantation [is] a house provided by the owner in which the slaves assemble to receive my instruction, and worship. I have lectured or preached every night, and three or four times each Sabbath, beginning at sunrise.²²¹

Two months later two plantations were added, by reason of which the missionary could visit each plantation "only once a fortnight." On some of the missions the missionaries were assisted in their work by Local Preachers, in the Church at large many Negroes having been licensed to preach, even though not receiving ordination.²²²

Despite the favorable attitude of many planters, missionary work among slaves was hedged about by various hindering restrictions. Legal restrictions, even to the extent of prohibition of the assembling of Negroes, existed in some states.²²³ In some communities in order that a Negro might be privileged to preach, a white man must be present. With exception of Sunday, slaves were not free to attend any religious services during the day, a restriction which placed a severe limitation upon the labors of the missionaries. Almost universally, instruction was not permitted to go beyond the merest rudiments of reading and writing and even this was in general discouraged.²²⁴ Writing to the Missionary Society on March 8, 1827, P. S. Graves, in charge of the New Orleans Mission, stated that in his effort to build up a Negro Sunday school he considered it necessary to refuse admission to "any who could not produce a written certificate from their masters."²²⁵ In some instances public protest was so strong as to cause discontinuance of missions. At the 1838 South Carolina Conference T. D. Turpin was appointed to the Cambridge and Flat

Woods Mission. Within a few months a remonstrance* was sent to the missionary, signed by 353 persons, protesting against the mission—the opposition comprising “the great body of the people.”²²⁶ Mr. Turpin relinquished his appointment.

Serious health hazards were an accompaniment of much of the work. The rice plantations, employing large numbers of slaves, were chiefly swamps, not only difficult of access but subject to epidemics of malaria in which the death toll was heavy. A number of those assigned to the missions succumbed to the deadly contagion. In 1840–41 the Missionary Society reported:

. . . our missionaries are still laboring on in the service of the slaves upon the rice fields, sugar, and cotton plantations. . . . In no portion of our work . . . called to endure greater privations, or make greater sacrifices of health and life, than in these missions among the slaves. . . . And yet, notwithstanding so many valuable missionaries have fallen martyrs to their toils . . . yet year after year there are found others to take their places. . . .²²⁷

In no small part due to the missions, Methodism made far more rapid gains in Negro membership than any other denomination, with the single exception of the Baptists. Methodist fervor and zeal, the itinerant system, and growth in the number of missions, together resulted in the period between 1827–28 and 1844–45 in an increase from 59,056 to 150,120.²²⁸ Yet at the end of the period, as at the beginning, it was still true that the work among Negroes was scarcely more than incidental—far less than proportionate to numbers and need—as declared by the Missionary Society of the South Carolina Conference:

In the present economy of our labours—although we preach daily, it is usually but one day in seven that they can share the benefit; and even on this seventh day, we can preach to but a few of them. In the formation of our circuits, we have been led—perhaps too much—by the white population; and it might seem that the negroes, where they have our ministry, are served rather accidentally than by primary intention. . . .²²⁹

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MISSIONS

Not until 1830–40 did nineteenth century immigration of foreign-speaking people become numerically important. During the fourth decade French, Belgians, and Swiss came in small numbers, as also the Dutch—who founded

* The document asserted that the “mental improvement and religious instruction” of slaves was incompatible with slavery. “Verbal instruction will increase the desire of the black population to learn. We know of upwards of a dozen negroes in the neighborhood of Cambridge who can now read, some of whom are members of your societies at Mount Lebanon and New-Salem. Of course when they see themselves encouraged, they will supply themselves with Bibles, hymn books, and Catechisms! . . . Open the missionary sluice, and the current will swell in its gradual onward advance. We thus expect that a *progressive system of improvement will be introduced*, or will follow from the nature and force of circumstances, and, if not checked, (though they may be shrouded in sophistry and disguise), *will ultimately revolutionize our civil institutions*. . . . *Intelligence and slavery have no affinity with each other.*”—Greenville (S.C.) Mountaineer, Nov. 2, 1838, quoted in William Goodell, *The American Slave Code in Theory and Practice* . . . , pp. 336f.

settlements in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. By the fifth decade (1840-50) the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes were coming by the tens of thousands. But most important numerically, beginning about 1830, was the new influx of Germans from all parts of Germany, both peasant farmers and skilled mechanics, increasing from year to year. This steadily increasing immigration of non-English-speaking people compelled consideration of foreign language missions.

The earliest of the Methodist missions to foreign-speaking people were those to the French. They were feeble efforts, not well sustained, but they marked the beginning of Methodist foreign language work.* In the *Minutes* of the New York Conference of May, 1819, is the entry: "New York District, William Phoebus,† missionary."²³⁰ McKendree's "Journal" for 1818 has this interesting explanatory paragraph:

Here [Norfolk, Va.] we unexpectedly met with Bishop George, in good health, with Dr. Phoebus and his family, from New York. The Doctor had been appointed a missionary to New Orleans, and was on his way there. The other Bishops had not been consulted in this appointment. The Doctor was approved—the size and consequent expense of supporting his family being the only difficulty. It was supposed that a thousand dollars would hardly support him, and he was then without money to bear his traveling expenses. Bishop George requested me to undertake the management of this business, but I declined; loaned the Bishop one hundred dollars, and bound myself to raise five hundred dollars in the West for the support of the mission, if it should be carried into effect, provided my colleagues would raise the balance. Dr. Phoebus was sent back to New York, and the hundred dollars returned.²³¹

That a sense of religious obligation to the French population troubled the conscience of some of the leaders of the Church is evident from a letter written at Natchez, Mississippi, in 1833 by Bishop John Emory:

I purpose . . . to pass down the Mississippi and visit New Orleans and Mobile, that I may have an opportunity of personally inspecting those two most important positions in this extensive section of our work. The demand for suitable missionaries in many parts of it, among both the white and the colored population, is

* The need for missions to the French population had long been on the heart of Francis Asbury. Writing to Joseph Benson, British Wesleyan leader, on Jan. 15, 1816, he said: ". . . Upon this continent we are crowded with French people. . . . We want French Methodist preachers, despairing of obtaining . . . [them] from the travelling connexion . . . our only hope is that some of our local brethren from Jersey or Guernsey will come over and help us. . . . can you aid us in this matter? (Letter, original in Candler School of Theology Collection, reprinted by W. L. Duren, in *Francis Asbury, Founder of American Methodism* . . . p. 253.) The fact has been previously noted (p. 208.) that concern for missionary work among the French was one of the factors in the organization of the Missionary Society.

† William Phoebus (1754-1831) was one of the most widely known members of the New York Conference. He was born in Somerset County, Md., and admitted on trial in the traveling ministry in 1783. He was a member of the Christmas Conference, and held important pastorates in Albany, N. Y., Charleston, S. C., and New York City. He was a physician and for several years as a located preacher engaged in the practice of medicine. In 1818-19 he served the Negro congregations of Zion and Asbury Churches, New York City. He was known as a man of exceptional independence of mind and of deep insight into human character. His preaching was characterized by Nathan Bangs as "solid and weighty," but not overly popular. In 1824 he superannuated and continued in that relation until his death in his seventy-eighth year.—Cf. W. B. Sprague, *op. cit.*, VII, 88ff.

urgent; and our inability to supply it gives me great concern. Will none volunteer? . . . Very many even of the French *Catholics*, I am assured, would gladly receive and hear a missionary from us, who could converse and preach in *French*. . . . If I fail to obtain . . . [help] in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina, of which I have but a distant hope, I shall be compelled, as my predecessors have been, to leave it again to the Lord of the harvest himself.²³²

Evidence is lacking in the records of the realization of Bishop Emory's hope in relation to a French mission in either New Orleans or Mobile.

At the New York Conference of 1838 Charles H. Williamson, a young man of French ancestry who was moved by deep concern for the spiritual welfare of his countrymen, was received on trial and appointed as "missionary to the French population in the city of New York." He was reappointed in 1839 and 1840.²³³ For several years a nucleus for a Methodist Society—a small group of immigrants from the Island of Guernsey—had existed in the city and an effort was made to reach others with the evangelical message. There were obstacles, however, to be overcome. No centrally located or suitable place of worship could be found and among French-speaking people in general there was prejudice against the Methodists. Moreover, funds were lacking for an aggressive program.* In 1841 the mission was suspended.²³⁴

A third abortive attempt to establish a French mission was made in 1845. Charles P. Clark had been admitted to the New York Conference in 1826 and when the Troy Conference was formed became one of its charter members, rendering acceptable service until 1845 when he was "transferred to the Mississippi Conference to labor as a missionary among the French people." He soon became fluent in the use of the French language and good results were expected from his missionary efforts, when—John G. Jones laconically reports—"he bolted into the Protestant Episcopal Church."²³⁵

Very different is the story of German language missions. As early as 1790, the estimated German-speaking population was not less than 600,000—the majority industrious, thrifty farmers—many of them among the intrepid pioneers who crossed the Alleghenies into western Pennsylvania and Ohio. For the most part they were religiously inclined and undoubtedly would have been responsive to Methodist missionary effort but no systematic attempt was made to reach them. Strangely enough Asbury, who was often among them and regarded them highly, made no sustained effort to establish German language missions, although some of the Circuit Riders were able to speak the language and occasionally preached in German.²³⁶ The final act in

* As regards the missionary, Charles H. Williamson, the record is obscure. The *Missionary Society Report* for 1840-41 says that he was "transferred for a season to another field of labor, on the borders of Lake Champlain. . . ." (*Twenty-second Annual Report, M.S.*, p. 17.) J. M. Reid says that he "withdrew from the Methodist Church." (*Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* [New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879], I, 81.) The *General Minutes* of 1841 contain the notation, "Charles H. Williamson has liberty to go to France, to visit his friends." (III, 143.) The 1842 *Minutes* record him as "Withdrawn."—*Ibid.*, p. 233.

Asbury's life drama was an earnest effort to persuade McKendree to undertake what he himself had failed to do. Writing on March 4, 1816—three weeks before his death—by the hand of John Wesley Bond, his traveling companion, Asbury describes the acute need which he deeply feels should be met. The work is important and the expense will be considerable but it must not be "taken up and put down lightly." The chief difficulty will be to get the necessary missionaries, though he names three who "ought to volunteer." Not less than four or five thousand dollars will be needed but he believes the required amount can be procured by means of "the *mite-subscription*, properly attended to." Bond's letter was accompanied by a short note from Asbury's own trembling hand, inscribed "My Dear Son," insisting "if we take up German missions, it must be spiritedly," naming four Districts to which missionaries should be sent—Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Carlisle, and Monongahela—and saying that he desired "the change of [Henry] Boehm and [Robert R.] Roberts because of Henry's usefulness in German."²³⁷ For some reason the plea of the dying leader was not carried out by McKendree, and Roberts* who six weeks later was elected to the episcopacy.

In 1824 Gottfried Duden emigrated to Missouri and in 1829 published a German book which attracted wide attention.²³⁸ The thirties brought troublous years for Germany. The winter of 1829–30 had been one of the most difficult ever known, causing severe economic hardships. The spirit of revolution was abroad and people throughout the nation were uneasy and restless. Agents of ship lines were active, seeking passengers. These several causes increased German emigration to new proportions. Reports of the prosperity of German rural communities in America attracted the attention of professional men and immigration, in addition to farmers and mechanics, now included doctors, musicians, teachers, and ministers.

Not yet had the Methodist Church developed a German language missionary program, but in 1835 a long overdue beginning was made when the Ohio Conference voted \$100. of Conference funds for support of William Nast,† who at that session was admitted on trial. The *Minutes* read Cincinnati: German missionary, W. Nast.²³⁹ The small appropriation—Nast was a married man—was a measure of the lack of enthusiasm for the project. Few of the Conference members were intimately acquainted with the new missionary and the proposal for the mission would have been voted down had it not been for the deep interest of the two Presiding Elders, Adam Poe and J. B. Finley. No one in the Conference dreamed that at last the apostle of German Methodism had come among them.

* Robert R. Roberts was at the time Presiding Elder of the Schuylkill, and Henry Boehm of the Chesapeake District, Philadelphia Conference.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 263.

† William Nast (1807–99) was born in Stuttgart, Germany, emigrating to the United States when twenty-one years of age. For fuller characterization of his personality and ministry see II, ch. VI.

The work began in a modest way. Nast had exceptional academic equipment, was a thorough scholar, fearless, and possessed a determined will, but he lacked the rough-and-ready popular qualities required for success in the typical mass-movement type of evangelism. He adhered closely to the Wesley-Asbury tradition of preaching wherever and whenever he could find hearers. His first sermon was delivered in the vestry of Wesley Chapel in Cincinnati to some twenty-odd Germans and twelve English-speaking Methodists who were interested in the new missionary effort. He preached in private homes and out-of-doors in public places. He preached in a schoolhouse on Elm Street and in Asbury Chapel on Main Street. He persistently rang doorbells, handing out tracts, and if entrance was permitted entered and engaged members of the family in religious conversation. Sometimes he took his stand at the entrance to beer gardens and distributed tracts. At the end of six months of strenuous effort he had succeeded in forming a Class of nine persons. By the end of another quarter he had added but three more. With a heavy heart he made his report to the Ohio Conference of 1836. With all diligence he had labored. Entering every door open to him, using every resource at his command, he was able to report only three conversions.²⁴⁰ He had accomplished, however, more than he or anyone else realized. There had been many adversaries but in the face of threatened violence and much petty persecution he had stood his ground.²⁴¹ He had made some steadfast friends—among them James Gamble, the Irish soapmaker—whose support in years to come was to be not only of incalculable value to German Methodism but to Methodism at large. Of his three converts, one was a burly bulldog of a man, Edward Hoch, who volunteered to act as Nast's personal bodyguard—protecting him from the violence of drink-crazed enemies—and who, years later, gave to Kansas her renowned temperance governor, his son, Edward W. Hoch.* A second of the three was John Zwehlen, who in 1840 at Wheeling, West Virginia, was largely responsible for the building of the first German Methodist Episcopal church in the world.²⁴²

Some Conference members were inclined to question the wisdom of centering German missionary effort in Cincinnati, even though Germans numbered almost one-quarter of the population. They had established numerous beer gardens; they published and read their own newspapers; they had even organized, in opposition to the public schools, institutions of their own in which the German language was taught.† Perhaps Cincinnati offered only stony

* Edward W. Hoch (1849–1925) served two terms as governor of Kansas, 1905–07, 1907–09.

† A well-defined purpose developed in Germany and among American immigrants to create somewhere in the United States a new Germany. The belief came to be widely held that amalgamation with Anglo-Americans and submergence of German culture and customs need not result from immigration. In Cincinnati, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and other communities, ambitious, determined efforts were made to perpetuate the German language, institutions, and customs. A plan was even advocated to concentrate immigration in some one of the territories in numbers sufficient to gain control of the state government and then establish by legislation the language, customs, and institutions of the fatherland.—See Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration*, pp. 123f., 167f.

ground! As a result of the questioning—and some open opposition—Nast's appointment for his second year was the state of Ohio, beginning at Columbus.²⁴³ He formed a three-hundred-mile Circuit with twenty-two preaching appointments, making the round in five weeks.²⁴⁴ In many places he found Christian believers and, though the evangelistic harvest was small—only seven new converts during the year—he succeeded in laying stable foundations for German Methodist churches in Columbus, Marion, Galion, and Bucyrus. During this year the sentiment regarding the work in Cincinnati had evidently changed for at the Conference of 1837 Nast was reappointed "missionary to Germans in Cincinnati." This year (1837–38) signs of a whitening harvest began to appear. Burke's Chapel on Vine Street was opened for German preaching, and Asbury Chapel on Upper Main Street was constituted a regular preaching appointment, with a Sunday school session following the service of public worship—the first organized German Methodist Sunday school. In the summer of 1838 the first German Methodist Society was organized, with nineteen members.²⁴⁵ At the Conference session of 1838 he urged the necessity of establishment of a German language press, insisting that the German population needed as great a work of reformation as did England in the time of John Wesley:

there is reason to fear that the importation of German literature and [immigration of] German people, will exercise as demoralizing an influence upon the Americans as the French once exercised upon the Germans. . . . the German immigrants, among whom there have been of late many well educated and wealthy men, are about to hold yearly conventions, in order to perpetuate the German language and literature, German sentiments, manners, and customs. . . . we might exercise a saving influence upon the Germans through the press, by publishing in the German language some of our doctrinal tracts, the Wesleyan Catechism, Fletcher's Appeal, some of Wesley's sermons, and, as soon as possible, a German Methodist periodical.²⁴⁶

The Conference was divided in sentiment. Many contended that little could be accomplished among "the infidel foreigners." Finally the issue was drawn on whether or not a German language periodical should be authorized. The proposal seemed likely to be defeated but in the end won, through persistent advocacy by Leonidas L. Hamline, then editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, later a Bishop. The appointments read: William Nast, Editor of the *Christian Apologist*; German mission, Peter Schmucker.* The first issue of the new periodical was dated January 4, 1839.²⁴⁷

In the authorization of a German language periodical the die was cast. By

* Peter Schmucker (1784–1860) was more effective as an evangelist than William Nast. Admitted on trial in the Ohio Conference in 1838, in his first year in charge of the Cincinnati Mission he received eighty persons into the Church. He came into the Methodist ministry from the Lutheran Church, an experienced preacher. In 1840 he founded a German mission in Louisville; in 1842 a mission in New Orleans; and in 1844 was appointed Presiding Elder of the Cincinnati District (German work), Ohio Conference.

the action of the large and influential Ohio Conference—this year third in number of Traveling Preachers—not only the Conference but the Church was committed to German language missions for *Der Christliche Apologete* circulated throughout the entire Connection. From Cincinnati as a center the German language work spread out in all directions. In its *Twenty-second Annual Report* (1840–41) the Missionary Society stated:

Our German missions [11 in number] are under the patronage of the Ohio, Pittsburg, Indiana, and Kentucky Conferences. . . . In these several places we are gaining access to multitudes of the German population, permanent and transient, and eight hundred and twenty-four church members are already included in these German missions, of whom more than two hundred are converted Roman Catholics.* . . . At each of the missions Sunday schools are in operation, which are attended by several hundred scholars. We have now fourteen German missionaries employed in these fields, and there is demand for more. . . .²⁴⁸

In the beginning the German work centered in the larger towns and cities, but soon a number of rural Circuits were formed. The principal city missions were Cincinnati, St. Louis, New York City, Louisville (Kentucky), Columbus (Ohio), Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Mobile. Other than in Cincinnati the pattern followed in the several cities was much the same. In the autumn of 1838 William Nast visited Pittsburgh and, after preaching in the German language for several weeks, formed a Methodist Society of thirty members. The work was then taken over by John M. Hartman who was admitted on trial in the Pittsburgh Conference at its 1839 session and appointed to the Pittsburgh German Mission. At the close of his first year he reported 110 members "in Society." Later, for lack of a suitable meeting place the mission for a time declined but when a well-located house of worship was secured interest speedily revived. Through the cooperation of the English-speaking congregations a church was built and the work placed on a permanent basis.²⁴⁹ The Louisville Mission was established in the fall of 1840 as the outgrowth of meetings held for German-speaking people during the session of the Kentucky Conference by Peter Schmucker who at the same session was appointed as missionary. Very soon a substantial brick church was built, accommodating a congregation of three hundred. The Society appears in the 1842 *Minutes* as the Clay Street German Church, with a membership—including the Maysville Mission—of 137.²⁵⁰ The 1841 New York Conference authorized a German mission in New York City. Later the Rev. Nathaniel Callender and the Rev. C. H. Doering—transferred from the Pittsburgh Con-

* It is a noteworthy fact that of the German preachers, missionaries, and lay leaders many were converts from Roman Catholicism—men who had failed to find a satisfactory religious experience in Romanism. Among these were George A. Breunig, Joseph E. Freygang (who had been a priest), Xavier Luneman, J. Hauck, Christian Brokmeir, Leger Ritty, and George Rottenstein. The spiritual biographies of these men are related at length in Adam Miller, *Origin and Progress of the German Missions*, pp. 143ff.

ference—were appointed as missionaries. The little nucleus of eight believers within a few months grew to sixty-four, and within two years nearly 200 were added. Difficulty in obtaining employment in the city caused some to leave but the *Minutes* for the Conference year 1843–44 report a membership of 130. “A beautiful and commodious brick church” was erected with “a good lecture-room and four pleasant class-rooms in the basement,” in addition to the auditorium, the Missionary Society endorsing the bonds of the trustees to the amount of \$5,000. to make building possible.²⁵¹

The spirit of the German converts is well illustrated in the story of the founding of the New Orleans Mission. A youth, converted in the German mission at Cincinnati, removed to New Orleans where he procured employment with a French gentleman as hostler. A room was furnished him in the stable, where he was soon holding weekly prayer meetings in the stable, attended by countrymen whom he had found in the city. In response to their call for help Peter Schmucker visited New Orleans and preached for them for two months, forming a Society and licensing Charles Bremer—one of the group—as a Local Preacher. At the Mississippi Conference of 1843 he was received on trial and appointed as missionary.²⁵² At this time the Society numbered thirty-three persons, increasing during the year to sixty.

Some of the mission Circuits were extensive. The Monroe Mission, Pittsburgh Conference, established in 1839, embraced an area seventy miles in length and forty in breadth, with twelve preaching appointments. In 1843–44, with ten preaching places—two having been attached to another mission—a membership of 214 was reported. The pastor preached on an average six sermons a week, traveling eighty miles each round. The Scioto (Ohio) Mission, to which the Rev. G. A. Bruenig was appointed in the autumn of 1840, had seven preaching places. The Evansville Mission, Indiana Conference, in its second year had fourteen preaching places, requiring 250 miles of travel.²⁵³

The German Methodists in general were devoted, earnest, stable Christians. They attached much importance to systematic religious instruction of new converts and of children. Almost without exception every Society, as soon as founded, established a Sunday school and in a few cases a day school as well. Frequently the records speak of “flourishing Sunday schools,” often also mentioning “a Sunday school library”—sometimes of one hundred and even two hundred volumes, both German and English. As a result of their spirit of devotion, their emphasis upon childhood nurture and religious family life, the German churches were soon supplying more candidates for the ministry, in proportion to their membership, than the English language churches. The Marietta (Ohio) Mission alone by 1843 had produced no less than six preachers.²⁵⁴

Within ten years following the modest appropriation of \$100. by the Ohio

Conference for the support of William Nast, American Methodism had a German membership of 2,059; with thirty-two missionaries and Traveling Preachers, and twenty-four Circuits and Stations. Having attained such proportions, it is not to be wondered at that the question of effective supervision became acute among the German-speaking preachers and laymen. The *Apologete* advocated the organization of a German Conference. Peter Schmucker agreed that it would be desirable but, fearing it would be considered by some too radical a change, proposed two German Districts—one within the Ohio Conference and one connected with the Missouri Conference. The 1843 Ohio Conference organized a German Mission District, Peter Schmucker, Superintendent. The various proposals came before the General Conference of 1844 for consideration. Three German language Districts were authorized.²⁵⁵ This resulted in the following organization of the German work: Ohio Conference, Cincinnati German District, Peter Schmucker, Presiding Elder, twelve Circuits and Stations; the Pittsburgh German District, Charles H. Doering, Presiding Elder, with eight Circuits and Stations; Missouri Conference, St. Louis German District, L. S. Jacoby, Presiding Elder, eleven Circuits and Stations, including appointments in Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa.²⁵⁶ While this provision represented an advance, it was not a fully satisfactory solution. The German population was too widely distributed to be satisfactorily ministered to by three Districts. Moreover the group as a whole had a strong nationalistic language consciousness which asserted itself vigorously and in the end would be satisfied with nothing less than German Annual Conferences.

V

Missionary Organization and Program 1820-44

THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION of the Church during the period of 1820-44 bears testimony to the continuing presence and power of the missionary spirit in its life. With the great missionary of the first century, hundreds of the Circuit Riders might truly have declared, of the Gospel of Christ "I have been appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. . . ."¹

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Missionary Society, chartered by the General Conference of 1820, and incorporated by the Legislature of New York in 1839, gradually made its influence felt during these years throughout the length and breadth of the Church. In terms of results achieved the record of the first decade is not impressive. Some of the chief causes are not difficult to discern.

The constitution did not definitely locate executive responsibility. No provision was made for an executive officer of the Society. The Board of Managers had no administrative budget. Primary responsibility for the extension of missions was recognized as residing in the Annual Conferences and the purpose of the Society was stated to be that of enabling "the Annual Conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labours throughout the United States and elsewhere."² For seventeen years (1819-20 to 1836-37) no officer of the Society received any remuneration, and all had full-time positions other than with the Society.

The Society lacked power to approve or to send out missionaries, or to make direct appropriation of funds for missionary work. Authority was vested in the Bishops to draw upon the Treasurer for any sum within the amount at their disposal, which the missionary committee of the Annual Conferences respectively should judge necessary for the support of the missionaries and of the mission schools under their care.³ The Treasurer was merely authorized to keep the Bishops informed of funds available. Under these conditions it is not strange that the Society as such was able to show little by way of definite achievement.

The Society was localized in New York. Initiative in its organization was taken by a small group of New York ministers and laymen and the General Conference did nothing to widen the scope of participation. Attendance at the annual meetings of the Society, at which officers and managers for the ensuing year were elected, was small and almost wholly limited to ministers and laymen of the New York Conference—chiefly of New York City and immediate vicinity. Many preachers traveled three hundred miles or more to attend the sessions of their Annual Conferences but preachers from Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New England were very seldom present at annual meetings of the Missionary Society. As a rule no other business came before the annual meeting than election of officers and managers.

An "Anniversary Meeting" also was held each year on a weeknight, usually in the John Street Church in New York City, to which the general public was invited. At this meeting the Annual Report of the Society was presented and ordered printed. No other actions were taken. The *Minutes* carry no record of presentation or approval of the Treasurer's Annual Report, either at the anniversary meeting or the annual meeting. The meetings generally were uneventful, the program varying little from year to year.*

The anniversary meeting of 1828 was attended by William Case, Superintendent of the Canada missions, accompanied by two of the teachers of a mission school and eight Indian children. The children were examined in the presence of the audience "with great satisfaction to the numerous persons present." John Sunday, a native Indian preacher and teacher, addressed the audience "with a zeal and pathos seldom exhibited by our own orators." Several months in advance, the Board had invited Mr. Case to attend the anniversary "accompanied by two or three of the Indian brethren," and to call at all the important towns on his route to New York, holding missionary meetings and taking collections for the Society.† The sixteenth anniversary meeting (1835) was made the occasion for the ordination, as elder, of the

* The order of program followed year after year with slight variation was: (1) hymn; (2) prayer; (3) reading of the Annual Report by Nathan Bangs; (4) hymn; (5) motion that the report be printed, followed by missionary addresses by the maker and seconder of the resolution, "after which the motion was put and carried"; (6) collection, during which an anthem was sung by a special choir; (7) presentation of the formal resolution—varied but slightly from year to year—"Resolved, that it is the duty of this Society to extend its operations, more especially among the aborigines of our country, and also among foreign nations"; a third missionary address by the mover of this resolution; (8) vote on the resolution; (9) benediction. Each year, several months in advance of the anniversary meeting, a program committee of the Board selected well-known ministers to present the stated resolutions, supporting them with addresses.

† In March, 1826, a similar invitation had been sent to James B. Finley, Superintendent of the Wyandot Mission. Mr. Finley came to New York, accompanied by two of the chiefs of the Wyandot Nation, Between-the-Logs and Monocue, but failed to arrive in time for the annual meeting. The group attended the anniversary of the Female Missionary Society of New York, and numerous other public meetings, their presence and addresses creating much interest. At the meeting of the Board on Sept. 20, 1826, the Treasurer reported having received a letter from Finley stating that "at Baltimore he had purchased a span of horses and a waggon, to convey himself and the two chiefs who attended him, home, where they had all arrived safe without accident, and that the collections and donations received on their journey were more than sufficient to pay expenses, so that on arriving at home he had about fourteen dollars left."—*Minutes*, B.M., 1, ms. unpagcd.

Rev. Beverly Wilson—"a pious man of colour, who had returned from the colony [Liberia], for the purpose of receiving orders."*

The Board of Managers held monthly meetings† and in these the predominantly local character of the Society was in evidence. The *Minutes* show that much of the business transacted concerned matters of purely local concern. Again and again, for example, when a member of the missionary committee of one of the New York City churches resigned or removed from the city the question of a successor was made a matter of Board consideration. Numerous other items of local reference monopolized time and attention. One misses in the *Minutes*, except on rare occasions, reports of consideration or discussion of matters of churchwide significance. Ambitious hopes were expressed by the officers but the activities of the Board were sadly limited in scope. As indicative of this limitation, during September of 1829 only "twelve communications from various persons" were received by the Corresponding Secretary and summary of their contents constituted the principal item of his monthly report. At another meeting one of the actions concerned designation of "a suitable place of deposit where any article of merchandise shall be stored which may be given to the Society." Each year a committee was appointed on the Annual Report. The tentative draft, when prepared, was presented to the Board for approval and the number of copies to be printed determined. The final report was read, or summarized, at the anniversary meeting.

LIMITED INITIATIVE AND AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD

The constitutional provision lodging with the Annual Conferences and the Bishops responsibility for establishing and maintaining missions could not do other than hamper the initiative of the Missionary Society. Since the provision was in the original draft of the constitution written by Nathan Bangs and approved at the April 25, 1819, meeting for organization of the Society, as presented to and officially adopted by the General Conference of 1820, it seems unlikely that it was intended as a prohibition of Board initiative. Nor did it ever operate as absolute. As we have seen, the Board in consultation with Bishop McKendree assumed responsibility in 1819 for selecting and approving two candidates for missionary work among the French in Louisiana, although it appears that when, in 1821, one of these candidates went to the field, he was sent by the New York Conference.‡

* He was ordained by Bishop Elijah Hedding, assisted by Beverly Waugh, Willbur Fisk, John Seys, and other elders. "This scene . . . occurring, as it did, near midnight, was peculiarly solemn and impressive. . . . On the whole this meeting exceeded in interest and success any other in the history of this Society."—*Sixteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1834-35), p. 3.

† For the first 13 years monthly meetings of the Board of Managers were regularly held in the John Street Church. Beginning with June, 1832, until November, 1833, the usual place of meeting was "the new church in Greene Street," when—following the erection of a building by the Book Concern with "a comfortable and commodious Library and Committee Room"—the place of meeting was changed to "No. 200 Mulberry St."

‡ See page 212.

However, how guardedly the Board exercised even limited initiative is shown by numerous actions. Early in 1825 attention was called to the religiously destitute condition of certain settlements in the Highlands of Putnam County, New York. Clearly it was a situation requiring missionary assistance but the Board did not venture to do more than recommend to the Bishops and the New York Conference that the section of country "between Peekskill and Fishkill be occupied as a missionary station."⁴ Accordingly at the 1825 Conference John B. Matthias was appointed to the "Highland Mission."⁵ Again, on October 19, 1825, "the Rev. Mr. Noble" from "the north-west section of Pennsylvania" described "the destitute situation of that part of the country" and urged that the Board give attention to it. On motion of Nathan Bangs he was asked to communicate the facts to the Presiding Elder of the Susquehanna District and to request him to correspond with the Bishops "respecting supplying it with missionary services."⁶

A pattern of procedure in establishing missions within Annual Conferences had been worked out before the 1820 General Conference action approving the Missionary Society as a churchwide missionary agency. This pattern is clearly illustrated by a recorded action of the 1819 Ohio Annual Conference, mentioned in the preceding chapter. The Conference, it may be recalled, authorized the sending of "a missionary to the northern Indians," and the employment of James Montgomery, a Local Preacher, as missionary; the mission to "be under the direction of the Presiding Elder of the Lebanon [Lebanon] District: and the Preachers of the Mad River Circuit." A committee was appointed "to wait on Brother Montgomery" to ascertain if he wanted "any assistance to enable him to carry into effect his Mission; and also to open a subscription to raise supplies for that purpose." The following day the committee reported Montgomery "ready and willing to enter on his mission, if he can be furnished with one hundred dollars immediately," to be deducted from his annual allowance of \$200. and his traveling expenses.⁷

This same general pattern was followed in establishing and supervising missions established after the 1820 General Conference action, with the sole addition of the Bishops drawing upon the Missionary Society for a part or all of the support required. The procedure followed in a particular case is illustrated by the following letter, written under date of October 21, 1822, by Bishop Enoch George to the Corresponding Secretary of the Society:

Dear Brother: This is to inform you and the Missionary Society, that some of the Cherokee Indians have received the word of life and become members of our church. A favourable opportunity now appears for the establishment of a mission among them and the Tennessee Conference have resolved that it shall be done. Andrew J. Crawford is accordingly appointed a missionary to labour among them for the present year. . . . The plan will require but moderate expense. The Indians

themselves will bear a part, and subscriptions will also be raised within the bounds of this Conference.⁸

A month later the Bishop drew upon the Missionary Society treasury for \$300.*

The all but exclusive Annual Conference and episcopal initiative and administrative supervision of the missions is shown by other examples. At the session of the Tennessee Conference (1820), following action looking toward the organization of a Conference Auxiliary, Thomas L. Douglass, Presiding Elder of the Nashville District, informed the Conference that \$27. "had been placed in his hands for missionary purposes," whereupon the Conference voted that the money should be "equally divided between the preachers who may be appointed to the Mission in Jackson's Purchase." Later in the session a resolution was adopted that:

1. The President of the Conference be directed to send two missionaries to that part of Jackson's Purchase included in Tennessee and Kentucky States, who shall be considered members, the one of Kentucky and the other of Tennessee Annual Conference; and these missionaries be directed to report in the ensuing spring each the true situation of that country in which he has labored to the Presiding Elders of Nashville and Green River Districts, whose duty it shall be to send them assistance, if necessary; and that said missionaries be the one under the direction of the Presiding Elder of Nashville District, and the other under that of the Presiding Elder of Green River District. . . .

3. That during the present year the Presiding Elders and preachers in charge of circuits and stations do make collections for the support of those missionaries who may be employed for the present year. . . .⁹

Again, under date of September 18, 1823, the Rev. G. R. Jones of the Ohio Conference wrote to the Missionary Society from West Union, Ohio. He stated that Bishop McKendree had reported a plan to establish a mission among the Chippewa Indians about eighty miles from Detroit, requiring the services of two missionaries, and another plan to establish a mission in New Orleans. The plans, together with proposed ways and means to be used, "were laid before the Conference in order to secure its approbation and cooperation . . . the preachers resolved to use their influence to support the undertaking."¹⁰

In numerous cases the Annual Conferences and the Bishops appear to have authorized missions and appointed missionaries without consultation with the Missionary Society, or even without informing the Society after action had been taken. At a meeting of the Board of Managers on October 19, 1825, "on motion of Dr. Bangs, seconded by Dr. Emory," it was resolved that the

* The Treasurer's report for the fiscal year April, 1822-April, 1823, carries the following entry: "Nov. 16, 1822. To cash paid Bishop George's draft in favor of Rev. Andrew J. Crawford, Missionary to the Cherokee Indians, \$300." This was the only payment by the Missionary Society to the Cherokee Mission shown by the Treasurer's report for the fiscal year.

Bishops "be requested to inform this Board whenever a new Mission is formed and the name of the missionary who may be appointed."¹¹

On the other hand, all preachers appointed by the Bishops as missionaries were considered by the Board to be "missionaries of the Society" and were reported as such in the annual reports. The *Fourth Annual Report*, for example, states that nineteen missionaries are employed "most of whom [are] under the patronage of this Society."¹² But due to the fact that the missionaries during these early years, almost without exception, drew much of such support as they received direct from the Conferences of which they were members, the relation between the Missionary Society and the missionaries naturally was not a close and intimate one—a condition which caused no little concern to the Board. Minutes of Board meetings and the Annual Reports of the Society contain numerous complaints that replies to inquiries and reports had not been received from missionaries. The Rev. J. A. Merrill, appointed as a missionary within the bounds of the New England Conference,¹³ replied to a request of the Society for a report of his work by saying that he was not much in favor of the practice of reporting how many miles he had traveled and how many sermons he had preached but since it was requested and was a general practice of the missionaries he would state "for the satisfaction of the Society" that in about eight months he had visited and preached in 70 towns, travelled 3,670 miles and preached 240 sermons.¹⁴

The sixth by-law of the constitution required the Corresponding Secretary to "maintain a direct communication with every Missionary supported by the Institution" and in turn required the missionaries "at least once in three months" to forward an account of the program of their work "either in the form of journal or otherwise."¹⁵ At a meeting of the managers on March 23, 1825, the Corresponding Secretary was directed "to inform the Bishops" that this requirement "has not been complied with" and to request them to write to the missionaries "requiring them to comply" with the constitution.¹⁶ This was followed on April 20, 1825, by a further action instructing the Corresponding Secretary "to state to the Missionaries" that unless they comply with the article requiring quarterly reports "the drafts in their favor will not be paid."

The *Minutes* of the Society reveal that as years passed a growing disposition developed on the part of the Board—though very gradually—to assert some degree of authority also in other ways. This is illustrated by an action taken on May 18, 1835. The Corresponding Secretary read to the Board a statement from the Rev. John Seys, Superintendent of the Liberia Mission, concerning some urgent needs of the mission. Nathan Bangs then offered a resolution which was unanimously adopted, recommending

one of the Bishops to appoint one additional white missionary for Africa . . . and that brother Seys be requested to employ brother Wilson and as many other

colored preachers as he may judge competent and necessary for the prosecution of the African Mission.¹⁷

Throughout the period (1820-44) divided administration by the Bishops, the Annual Conferences, and the Board continued to cause complications. By action of the Board on March 27, 1837, the establishment of the Texas Mission was approved. The next year (May 30, 1838) Bishop Soule informed the Board that the Bishops considered it expedient "to annex the Texas Mission to one of the Conferences." Thereupon it was resolved

That this Board recommend to the Bishops that the Mission to Texas, now under control of the Board, be annexed to either of the Conferences, whenever in their judgment it shall become necessary.¹⁸

On July 18 the Corresponding Secretary informed the managers of a communication from Bishop Beverly Waugh,* Secretary of the Board of Bishops, stating that "the Bishops had concluded to take the Texas Mission into the Mississippi Conference."¹⁹ The following year (November 20, 1839) the Corresponding Secretary reported having received letters from Texas and elsewhere complaining that placing the mission under the superintendence of the Mississippi Conference was "preventing some from offering themselves for that Mission who would be willing to join it provided . . . [it] was . . . under the direct charge of [the] Board." It was thereupon ordered that the Corresponding Secretary open correspondence with the Bishops on the matter.²⁰ The *Minutes* contain no further reference to the subject.

There were complications also in the matter of drafts upon the treasury of the Board in excess of annual appropriations. At the beginning of each year the Board determined the aggregate for Conference missions and notified the Bishops of the total available, but made no allocations to the respective Conferences, leaving each Bishop free to draw upon the treasury for whatever amounts his Conferences might require. In December, 1843, Bishop Soule wrote to the Corresponding Secretary of his effort to hold Conference appropriations to the minimum in order to keep the total drafts within the prescribed limits and by that means "save the Treasury from embarrassment and ourselves and all concerned from the mortification which would inevitably result from our drafts being protested." At seven Conferences, he stated, he

* Beverly Waugh (1789-1858) was born in Fairfax County, Va., the son of a veteran of the American Revolution. In 1807 he became manager of a store in Middleburg, Va. While thus employed he became convinced of a call to the ministry. He was received on trial in the Baltimore Conference in 1809. Elected to the General Conferences of 1816 and 1820, he advocated the election of Presiding Elders, but in 1828 defended the *status quo*. As a member of the committee on the Book Concern in the General Conference of 1828 he showed such knowledge of business methods that he was elected Assistant Book Agent. In 1832 he was made principal Book Agent, and in 1836 was elected Bishop. During his twenty-two years in the episcopacy he is said to have made 12,000 appointments and traveled 100,000 miles, developing a reputation for equal justice in his exercise of the appointive power. In the division of the denomination he chose to remain with the Methodist Episcopal Church.—*Lives of Methodist Bishops*. T. L. Flood and John W. Hamilton, Eds. (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1882), pp. 226-262; J. E. Armstrong, *History of the Old Baltimore Conference* (Baltimore: 1907), pp. 480f.; *Gen'l Minutes* (Meth. Episc. Ch.), 1858, p. 6 and Memoir, i-iv.

had drawn for a total of \$7,996. But, he stated further, he had recently met Bishop Andrew who informed him that "he had drawn on the Treasury for between 20 and 30 thousand dollars." "What," Bishop Soule asked, "is to be done?" He had yet to hold the Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina Conferences where the greater part of the important Negro Missions were located. In this instance a special meeting of the Board was called and Bishop Soule was authorized to draw on the Treasurer for such sums as were deemed absolutely necessary for the missions of the Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina Conferences, "not to exceed, however, the sum of Sixteen Thousand Dollars."²¹

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

The constitution of the Society provided that the officers should be "a president, five vice-presidents, clerk, recording and corresponding secretaries, and treasurer who . . . [shall be] annually elected by the society." Also, that "each annual conference shall have the privilege of appointing one vice president from its own body." The officers, it stipulated, "together with thirty-two managers, shall form a board for the transaction of business."²² Bishop William McKendree who, it will be remembered, was made President when the Society was first organized, was re-elected annually until his death. His exhausting schedule of travel in attending Annual Conferences, combined with continuing physical infirmities, made it impossible for him to attend many of the meetings of the Board.* Bishops George and Roberts were re-elected annually as first and second Vice President, respectively, until the death of McKendree. By then the tradition had been established that the office of President should be filled by the senior Bishop, and the offices of Vice President by the other Bishops in order of seniority in office—a tradition that determined the elections throughout the present period (1819–44).

For the major part of the period the officary of the Missionary Society was closely tied in with that of the Methodist Book Concern. The original constitution, in agreement with General Conference action, stipulated that the Society should be established "wherever the Book Concern may be located,"²³ and it was so located by the General Conference in order "that it might avail itself of the Book Agent for Treasurer. . . ."²⁴ The fact that in 1819 Joshua Soule was senior Book Agent was undoubtedly the determining factor in his election as Treasurer. Thomas Mason,²⁵ Assistant Editor and General Book Steward, was made Corresponding Secretary.†

* Of some 200 meetings of the Board between Bishop McKendree's election in 1819 and his death he was present at only three. Of the annual anniversary meetings he was present on two occasions.

† Thomas Mason was re-elected annually until 1825. His constitutional term as Assistant Book Agent had expired in 1824 and John Emory, having been elected to that position, the next year succeeded Mason as Corresponding Secretary. He continued to fill the office for three years (1825–26; 1826–27; 1827–28). For one year, 1828–29, J. J. Matthias—one of the six preachers on the New York City Circuit—served as Corresponding Secretary, to be followed in 1829 by Beverly Waugh who had been made Assistant Book Agent by the General Conference of 1828. After two months Waugh

The constitution provided that "At all meetings of the society and of the board, the president, or in his absence, the vice president first on the list then present, and in the absence of all the vice presidents, a member, appointed by the meeting for that purpose, shall preside."²⁶ Nathan Bangs was the first preacher to be made a Vice President by election of an Annual Conference. Presiding Elder that year of the New York District, he was elected by the New York Conference at its session in May, 1819.²⁷ In 1820 the General Conference elected him Book Agent, and in 1822 the Missionary Society elected him Treasurer. He was re-elected annually as Treasurer until 1836, when the General Conference revised the constitution, including provision for the first time for a salaried Corresponding Secretary whose undivided time and attention should be given to the work of the Society as its executive officer. The wisdom of this action was almost immediately evident in widespread increase of missionary interest.

From the beginning it was the practice of the Board to refer all matters requiring attention to special committees for consideration and report. Not until 1834 is reference found in the *Minutes* to a standing committee. This year a Committee of Estimate was authorized.²⁸ At the beginning of the fiscal year 1841-42 a Committee on Standing Committees was elected, which recommended five committees of seven members each, so distributed "as to place no member on more than one committee, and at the same time giving a majority of each to the lay members of the Board." The committees created were: Estimating Committee; Financial Committee; African Committee; Oregon Committee; South American Committee.²⁹

LAY PERSONNEL OF THE BOARD

The constitution of the Missionary Society did not specifically provide that the "thirty-two managers" should be laymen, but the thirty-two persons originally elected as managers were all laymen* and this precedent was followed throughout the entire period.† A number of men outstanding in the

presented his resignation, pleading lack of time—owing to urgent press of business—to attend adequately to the correspondence of the Society. In his place the Rev. George Coles was elected. After one month Mr. Coles also resigned, pleading lack of time to attend to the duties involved. In his stead, on July 15, 1829, the Rev. Samuel Luckey was elected, who served until the annual meeting of April 18, 1831. Beverly Waugh was then again elected to the office, serving during the years 1831-32; 1832-33; and 1833-34. At the annual meeting on April 21, 1834, John P. Durbin became Corresponding Secretary. On July 16 he resigned, having accepted the presidency of Dickinson College. Whereupon, on the same day, Nathan Bangs resigned as Treasurer and was made Corresponding Secretary.

* Of the thirty-two laymen originally chosen as managers eight resigned during the first year. The lay members of the Board as elected at the second annual meeting, April 17, 1820, were Philip I. Arcularius, John Boyd, Lancaster S. Burling, George Caines, Stephen Dando, Benjamin Disbrow, William Duval, James B. Gascoigne, Dr. N. Gregory, Samuel B. Harper, Paul Hick, Nathaniel Jarvis, Robert Mathison, Andrew Mercein, William A. Mercein, Joseph Moser, William Myers, James B. Oakley, John Paradise, Abraham Paul, Thomas Roby, Joseph Sandford, Dr. Richard Seaman, Nicholas Schureman, William B. Skidmore, Joseph Smith, M. H. Smith, Robert Snow, George Suckley, Samuel L. Waldo, John Westfield, James Woods.

† A provision for *ex-officio* members was also included in the constitution: "... ordained ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether travelling or local, being members of the Society, shall be

religious, business, and professional life of New York City served as managers of the Society.

One of the laymen most interested in the organization of the Missionary Society was Francis Hall (1785–1866), a native of England. He was elected Clerk of the Board at the meeting of organization,* serving in that capacity until 1837, and from 1837 to 1847 as Recording Secretary.³⁰ He continued as a member of the Board until 1866. Among his posthumous papers was found a brief memorandum which read, "I have no recollection that I ever kept a meeting waiting for me. It was my aim to be at the place appointed at the moment appointed for the meeting." Within a few years after coming to the United States he became connected with the *Commercial Advertiser* and the *Spectator* of New York City, subsequently becoming chief owner and publisher. He was for years on the boards of the New York Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, the New York Colonization Society; and a member of the Council of New York University. In 1854 Wesleyan University conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Laws but "such was his modesty that he never consented to use the title, and was unwilling to have it ascribed to him."³¹

Philip I. Arcularius (1747–1825), in his youth a member of the German Lutheran Church, joined the John Street Society in 1787 and within a few years thereafter became a Class Leader. For several years he served as a member of the State Legislature.³² Joseph Smith (1765–1840), a Local Preacher, was an active member of the Church for more than half a century. He also served as representative in the Legislature of New York. His service is commemorated by a tablet on the wall of the old John Street Church.³³ George Suckley, whose name occurs frequently in Asbury's *Journal*, said to have come to America in company with Thomas Coke, was an active member of the Board from its organization to his death in 1846 in his eighty-first year. He was a well-known merchant, prominent in municipal affairs, honored for the sincerity and consistency of his Christian character.³⁴ On occasions when loans were needed the Treasurer of the Board borrowed from the bank on his personal endorsement as security.† Gilbert Coutant (1766–1845), of Huguenot descent, united with John Street Church in 1789, and was for over forty years a Class Leader. He served for two terms in the Leg-

ex-officio members of the Board of Managers and be entitled to vote in all meetings of the Board." (Art. 5.) The payment of two dollars, annually, made one a member for life. Under these provisions, after a few years, there were several hundred members of the Society but the *Minutes* show that few *ex-officio* members exercised the right of regular attendance on and participation in the meetings of the Board.

* A tea for the ministers of New York City was held at the home of Francis Hall on April 5, 1819, whence the group went to the Forsyth Street Church (then Second Street Church) for the organization.—William C. Smith, *Pillars in the Temple; or Sketches of Deceased Laymen of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . (New York: Carlton and Lanahan, 1872), p. 102.

† Jan. 17, 1838, amount borrowed from the bank on Treasurer's notes, "endorsed by George Suckley," \$10,000.—*Minutes, B.M.*, III, 104.

islature of New York, and for many years held the office of Register of New York.³⁵

One of the youngest members of the original Board of Managers was William B. Skidmore (1792–1876), who continued as a manager of the Society until 1876—a period of fifty-seven years. He was ever held in high esteem for his sagacity and fidelity.³⁶ His distinguished son, Lemuel Skidmore, succeeded his father as a member of the Board, freely rendering through more than twoscore years legal service beyond the reckoning of ledger and treasury.

James Harper (1795–1869) was one of the forty-two persons named in the act incorporating the Missionary Society and on May 21, 1838, was elected a member of the Board.³⁷ His grandfather was one of the earliest American Methodists. Long an official member of John Street Church, immediately following his election as a manager he was put on the Estimating Committee and became an active and influential member of the Board. His business career was a notable one. In their youth he and his brother John were apprenticed printers, later establishing a small printing office of their own. Their first printed book (1817) was Seneca's *Morals*, and in April, 1818, their imprint as publishers—J. and J. Harper—first appeared upon an edition of five hundred copies of Locke's *Essay upon the Human Understanding*. The business grew rapidly, two younger brothers—Joseph Wesley and Fletcher—were admitted as partners, and in 1825 the firm's name was changed to Harper and Brothers. In 1844 James Harper was elected mayor of New York City. Frequently urged to stand for election to Congress, he invariably declined, saying that he preferred "to stick to business he understood."³⁸

Two laymen in the original list of managers were physicans—one, Dr. Nehemiah Gregory (?–1824), being the first person to make a sizable contribution, \$500., to the treasury of the Society. The other, Dr. Richard Seaman* (1785–1864), in 1823 gave up a lucrative medical practice to enter the ranks of the itinerant ministry.³⁹ A third physician, David M. Reese (1800–61) was elected a member of the Board in 1828. He was a prominent physician with an extensive practice, who became physician-in-chief of Bellevue Hospital. For several years he was superintendent of public schools of the city of New York, and later of the county.⁴⁰ He contributed frequently to medical literature and was the author of several books—among others, *Observations on the Epidemic of Yellow Fever*, and *The Epidemic Cholera*. On October 19, 1842, after fourteen years' service on the Board, having removed from New York City, Dr. Reese resigned. During his term of office he was regular in attendance on the monthly meetings of the managers and one of the

* Richard Seaman's first appointment as a minister (1823) was to the New Rochelle Circuit. In 1831 he was appointed to "the Harlem Mission," establishing a connection that continued to the end of his life. He devoted "his life and property to the cause of God in that region." —S. A. Seaman, *Annals of New York Methodism* . . . , pp. 264f.

most active and useful members, serving frequently on important committees. James L. Phelps, M.D., (1784–1869) became a member of the Board in 1826, continuing his service for forty-two years. The *Fifty-first Annual Report* says, "Perhaps the record of no [other] member . . . will show an equally unbroken attendance at the meetings of the Board."⁴¹ He was one of the original trustees of Wesleyan University—"a wise counsellor, and a man of great purity of life and character."⁴²

No man—layman or minister, with the single exception of Nathan Bangs—was more intimately related to the missionary cause than Gabriel P. Disosway (1799–1868). His name does not appear in the early printed lists as one of the managers of the Missionary Society by reason of the fact that as president of the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York his relationship was that of an *ex officio* manager.⁴³ In 1838 he was regularly elected a member of the Board. Of Huguenot descent, he was a son of Israel Disosway, the first Class Leader of the Staten Island Methodist Society, appointed by Francis Asbury, and later for many years an office holder of John Street Church. He graduated from Columbia College in 1819, and from 1820 to 1828 was engaged in business in Virginia. During this period he became one of the two principal founders of Randolph-Macon College. In 1829 he was elected a member of the New York Legislature. He wrote urgently to the Missionary Society early in the twenties recommending the establishment of a mission in Liberia and at the General Conference of 1832, as secretary of the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York, he pledged the support of Melville B. Cox as missionary to Liberia. To him William Walker addressed the historic letter concerning the visit of the "Flat Head Indian chiefs" to St. Louis in quest of the white man's Book of Life which, published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald* of March 1, 1833, eventually led to the founding of the Oregon Mission. To the day of his death he "unwearingly labored, writing, speaking, and soliciting funds" for the Missionary Society, the American Colonization Society, the American Bible Society, the House of Refuge, and New York University. In the dedicatory preface of the first volume of his monumental *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Abel Stevens acknowledges "with grateful pleasure" his obligations to him for "indispensable aid" and constant "counsels and encouragements" in his historical research and writing.⁴⁴

AUXILIARY SOCIETIES

The organization of Auxiliary Societies in all the Annual Conferences of the Church and branch societies in all the Circuits and Stations was from the beginning contemplated by the founders of the Society, and the Bishops were asked by the General Conference "to use their influence to give effect

to the recommendation." Within the first year eight affiliated auxiliaries were organized.* Some local missionary societies seem to have been formed independently of the general Society.†

It is of interest to note that the auxiliary first named in the reports of the Society is "The New York Female Missionary and Bible Society," an augury of the part to be taken by women in the future missionary work of Methodism. The notification of organization sent by the secretary is phrased in terms of exceeding humility:

I have the pleasure to inform you, that a number of females in this city, with a desire to contribute their feeble aid to the benevolent purposes of your institution, have formed an [auxiliary] association. . . . Although our number was small in the beginning, we have reason to be encouraged with the present prospects of the society, and are not without hopes, that we shall not be an entirely useless branch of the parent institution.⁴⁵

During the second year, the South Carolina Conference (January 13, 1820), the Virginia Conference (February 23, 1820), and the Baltimore Conference (March 8, 1820), as previously stated, "organized themselves into auxiliary societies." At Albany, New York, also, a Female Auxiliary Society was formed.⁴⁶

Numerous branch societies also were organized during the early years. The Genesee Conference Auxiliary in its first annual report, published in 1823, speaks of a number of branch societies having been formed, including three in Canada.⁴⁷ The next year Genesee Conference added thirty-four branch societies. The South Carolina Conference Auxiliary added eight branches.⁴⁸

Children's missionary societies were organized as well. The Juvenile Finleyan Missionary Mite Society of Baltimore was formed for the special purpose of aiding the Wyandot Mission and proved to be "a very efficient helper." Inspired by it, a group in New York organized the Juvenile Missionary Society, of which William McKendree Bangs, "a mere lad," was made president. It continued for a few years only, "having done but little."⁴⁹ Juvenile societies were also established in St. George's, Union, and Ebenezer churches in Philadelphia.

* The first eight auxiliaries were: (1) The New York Female Missionary and Bible Society; (2) The Young Men's Missionary and Bible Society in New York (Aug. 2, 1819); (3) The Courtlandt Circuit Missionary and Bible Society; (4) New Rochelle Circuit (N.Y.) Auxiliary (Nov. 20, 1819); (5) Stamford (Conn.) Circuit Auxiliary Society (Dec. 5, 1819); (6) The Genesee Conference Missionary and Bible Society (organized Aug. 29, 1819, in the village of Ithaca, N. Y.); (7) Boston Auxiliary (by exchange of constitution of the formerly existing "Methodist Domestic Missionary Society" for the one sent from New York, Nov. 12, 1819); (8) Columbia, S. C., Missionary Society—*First Annual Report of the Missionary and Bible Society* as published in the *Methodist Magazine*, III (May, 1820), 185ff.

† At a meeting of the citizens of Mt. Carmel, in Edwards County, Ill., Saturday afternoon, July 22, 1820, to take into consideration the establishment of an Indian free school and Indian mission, Elias Stone, a Traveling Preacher, was chosen chairman, and Thomas S. Hinde, secretary. After an address by W. Beauchamp, a Methodist Missionary Society was organized, and a constitution adopted.—*The Methodist Magazine*, III (October, 1820), 390. In his *History of Methodism in Illinois* (p. 164) James Leaton says this was "the first missionary society in the state."

At the fifth anniversary meeting (April 23, 1824) the Board reported that 103 Auxiliary and branch societies were in existence.⁵⁰ For a time organization apparently almost ceased, since at the seventh anniversary only two new Auxiliary Societies were reported, and at the eighth meeting the managers said, "as nearly as can be ascertained there are about one hundred auxiliary and branch Societies."⁵¹ Twelve of the seventeen Annual Conferences were reported to have formed Auxiliary Societies.

Some of the Conference Auxiliaries first organized had only a short life. The Tennessee Conference authorized an Auxiliary in 1821⁵² but this apparently did not long continue since again in 1827 similar action was taken—a constitution adopted and a Board of Managers appointed. In connection with this latter action a resolution was passed "that the preachers should be diligent in forming Branch Societies in their respective fields."⁵³ At the second session of the Illinois Conference (1825) on the fifth day "the Conference adjourned to give the members time to form a Conference Missionary Society, and to resume their sitting so soon as the business of the Society shall be accomplished."⁵⁴ At the fourth session of the Holston Conference (1827) the organization of Tract, Sunday-school, and Missionary Societies was considered but no action was taken on missionary organization. At the eighth session (1831),* however, "the Conference resolved itself into a Missionary Society."⁵⁵ At the first session of the Indiana Conference, the members "proceeded to form themselves into a Missionary Society."⁵⁶ In the Kentucky Conference no steps were taken toward organizing a Missionary Society until 1834. Two years had passed since the first missionary contribution had been made and at the Conference of this year only \$269.30 was reported—"chiefly, if not entirely, contributed by the preachers themselves." Clearly, the people needed to be aroused. Immediately after the report was made it was proposed that a Missionary Society be organized, auxiliary to the parent Society. Not only was this done but an agent, Milton Jamison, was appointed "to travel through the Conference, deliver sermons . . . form societies, take up collections, and awaken, as far as possible, general interest in behalf of missions."⁵⁷ The missionary collections for 1836–37 totalled \$2,083.06. At the first session of the Erie Conference (August 17–23, 1836) the first action taken, after organization and before rules of the Conference were adopted, was appointment of a committee "to draft a constitution for a Missionary Society."⁵⁸ In 1837, the Conference historian records, the Mississippi Conference Auxiliary Society was fully alive "to the general cause of missions, held anniver-

* At the session of the following year (1832) the Missionary, Bible, Tract, and Sunday-school Societies were consolidated and action was taken providing for the organization of Auxiliary Societies on the Circuits and Stations, the monies raised to be reported to the Conference and divided: one-third to the parent Missionary Society; one-third to the Bible, Tract, and Sunday school causes; and one-third "for cheapening Sunday-school books sold within the bounds of the Conference."—R. N. Price, *Holston Methodism*, III, 265.

sary meetings, and encouraged the formation of auxiliary societies everywhere."⁵⁹

During all these years the Philadelphia Conference Society* continued to go its own way. In April, 1828, it was reported that the Philadelphia Society was "pursuing its course of contributing to advance the general cause with unabated zeal"—having paid to the Wyandot Mission \$200.; to the Cherokee Mission \$600.; and to Canada Missions \$400. In the *Ninth Annual Report* the Missionary Society stated that it gladly availed itself "of another opportunity to acknowledge this [the Philadelphia Conference] society as a fellow-labourer and co-worker in the missionary enterprise."⁶⁰ By 1830 its annual contribution had increased to \$3,147.96. Finally, in 1841 the Society reported readiness "to confer . . . on the subject of forming a connection with [the general] Society."⁶¹ Representatives of the two Societies conferred, agreement ultimately was reached, and in January, 1844, the merger was consummated.†

In the course of the years a tendency gradually developed for the children's Missionary Societies to give way to Sunday-school Auxiliaries. In 1841 the Board reported that Sunday-school Auxiliaries had become "among the most important and successful instrumentalities for increasing . . . funds"—some having rivaled "older and long-established auxiliaries by the amount of their contributions. . . ." ⁶²

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

The Missionary Society began its official career with a balance in its treasury from its first, unofficial year's operations, of \$737.27½. For the year 1820–21 receipts were \$2,238.76 and expenditures \$407.87. For the second year of the official organization receipts increased slightly. The report presented by the Treasurer to the General Conference of 1824 showed total receipts from the formation of the Society (April 5, 1819) to April 23, 1824, of \$14,716.24½.‡ Expenditures for the same period were \$11,011.40¾.⁶³ With this very modest beginning, it was a great day for the Society when in its tenth year (1829) it was able to report receipts of \$14,176.11.§ So encour-

* See p. 206.

† The record of the action reads: "Resolved, that the . . . plan of Union proposed . . . [by the Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church] and concurred in by the Philadelphia Conference Missionary Society, be, and it is hereby sanctioned by this Board."—*Minutes, B.M.*, IV (Jan. 17, 1844), 324.

‡ "This shows the feeble manner in which the society commenced its operations, and how long it was, notwithstanding the favorable manner in which it had been received by the annual conferences, before the people generally came fully into this great and good work."—Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 270f.

§ Compare this income with that of some other missionary societies, during their early years. The Missionary Society of Connecticut, organized in 1798, for 1799 had receipts of \$3,126.88, with disbursements of \$883.06. (*New York Missionary Magazine* . . . I [1800], 182.) During its first decade annual receipts exceeded expenditures, so that by 1807 funds in the treasury amounted to more than \$25,000. The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, organized in 1802, welcomed into its membership anyone who was willing to contribute a minimum of one dollar a year. Annual receipts increased gradually until in the fiscal year 1810–11 its income was \$1,471.75. During the next five

aged were the managers that they felt justified in authorizing the Bishops "to draw for twenty thousand dollars for missionary purposes the present year."⁶⁴

Financially, the going during the first few years had been difficult. Inasmuch as New York was the center of operations it was expected that the churches of the New York Conference would contribute liberally. But for some years these expectations were disappointed. Only small, irregular contributions were received. To stimulate giving, at a meeting of the Board of Managers on June 21, 1826, a committee of three persons from each of the New York City churches was appointed "to collect subscriptions for the benefit of the Missionary Society." At the first meeting of the committee representatives were present from only three of the seven churches. Undismayed, the committee made plans for stimulating interest and support, including a monthly missionary prayer meeting to be held in turn in the several churches,* a revival of an earlier plan. But results were meagre. At the October Board meeting subscriptions were reported from three churches only—aggregating \$9. The January, 1827, reports were slightly more encouraging—from John Street two new subscriptions amounting to \$3., and Duane Street ten subscriptions totalling \$11.25. The monthly prayer meeting plan apparently had not been too successful, for at the July 18 Board meeting a motion was again passed urging that "the monthly missionary prayer meeting" be revived. No effort was made to organize the New York Conference into an Auxiliary Society, the plan and expectation being that members of that Conference—since the headquarters of the Society were located in New York—would maintain annual memberships in the parent Society.† Even though progress was slow in enlisting memberships, at the end of the 1828–29 fiscal year the Treasurer was able to report receipts within the New York Conference of \$4,108.92.⁶⁵

Major sources of contributions were the Conference Auxiliaries. Of the approximately \$15,000. received prior to the General Conference of 1824, almost \$10,000. came from Auxiliaries.‡ As the years passed contributions of in-

years annual receipts were about \$1,000. (*Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, September, 1811; September, 1812; September, 1813; September, 1814; September, 1815.) Income of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, organized in 1810, increased rapidly during its early years, chiefly due to liberal contributions of a few wealthy benefactors. "Between the annual meeting of September, 1811, and June 20, 1812, over \$12,000. was collected, \$7,000. of which came from four donors and about \$4,000. from various auxiliary societies."—Oliver W. Elsbree, *The Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America, 1790–1815*, p. 112.

* The monthly missionary prayer meetings were doubtless suggested by the British plan. Article XVIII of the "Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society" formulated in 1818 urges the holding of "monthly missionary prayer-meetings in every chapel in the Methodist Connexion."—G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 77.

† Many of the local churches of the New York Conference organized Auxiliary Societies that made contributions direct to the parent organization.

‡ The exact amounts received from the several sources, as reported to General Conference, were: Auxiliaries, \$9,934.01; membership subscriptions, \$1,759.50; donations, \$1,643.57; sundry collections, \$1,074.16½; interest, \$305. Total, \$14,716.24½.—"Financial Report of the Board of Managers to the General Conference" (1824), unpagcd ms.

creasing amount came from them.* Next in volume were individual membership subscriptions,† while a third principal source was miscellaneous gifts or donations. No gift, however small, was despised. An entry in the Treasurer's account under date of June 16, 1823, reads, "A donation from a person who after long struggle left off the use of tobacco, and is better in health ever since, \$1.50." Another entry, under date of January 19, 1825, reads, "A bed quilt and a pillow case." Some personal gifts were substantial in amount. At a meeting of the Board on February 20, 1827, "Brother John Westfield stated that he was the bearer of a handsome donation from a lady," thereupon presenting on her behalf \$500. in cash. The item, "Donation from a member of the Board, \$100.," recurs annually. Non-Methodists were occasional contributors. At the March 21, 1827, meeting an entry in the *Minutes* reads, "Donation from a Presbyterian, \$2."

Some pastors took a special interest in missions, becoming zealous advocates of the cause and devising different methods of increasing support. One such was John Summerfield, an eloquent Irishman, who came over from Ireland and joined the New York Conference in 1821. His popularity as a preacher attracted large audiences but he possessed sufficient common sense to recognize the value of preaching to children as well as to adult crowds and made it his practice to address audiences of children at stated times on missionary themes, at the same time taking collections in aid of missions. The Missionary Society Treasurer's report for 1822-23, under date of March 20, 1823, has this entry: "By cash received from Rev. J. Summerfield . . . the amount of the children's collections presented at the last anniversary by Washington Cockle (a twelve-year-old boy), with a request that it might be appropriated for the education of children of the Wyandott Mission, 412.29."⁶⁶

Despite the feeling of urgency among leaders of the Church for the expansion of missionary activities, during the early years of the Society receipts were considerably in excess of drafts upon the treasury. On August 9, 1820, the Bishops were authorized to draw on the Treasurer of the Society for \$1,400. Eight months later uncalled-for funds in the treasury amounted to \$2,222.27 and the Treasurer was authorized "to loan the money to the Stewards of the Book Concern at an interest of 6 per cent per annum."⁶⁷ Throughout the decade funds available exceeded requirements made on the Society by

* On May 9, 1823, a contribution of \$505.77 was received from the New England Conference Missionary Society; May 21, 1823, Baltimore Conf. Aux. Soc., \$920.; Mch. 26, 1824, South Carolina Aux. Soc., \$924.40; Dec. 22, 1824, Ohio Conf. Aux., \$650.; April 20, 1825, Virginia Conf. Aux. Soc., \$702.11; Oct. 20, 1826, Canada Missy. Soc. Aux., \$638.84 (one year later \$1,000.); Feb. 20, 1827, Tenn. Conf. Aux. Soc., \$712.50.

† The constitution of the Missionary Society provided (Art. 7) that persons subscribing \$2. annually became members of the Society, and the payment of \$20. at one time constituted a person "a member for life." Among those becoming life members during the first year were Joshua Soule, Thomas Mason, Lancaster S. Burling, and Dr. N. Gregory. Several persons by making \$20. gifts constituted others life members. "A Female Bible Class" contributed \$20. "to constitute the Rev. Nathan Bangs a member for life."

the drafts of the Bishops. In the *Eleventh Annual Report* (1829-30) the Corresponding Secretary stated that, although the missionary field was continually enlarging and calls for support increasing proportionately, "yet the report of the Treasurer will show that there is no lack of means to sustain and carry on the work."⁶⁸ Two years later (1831-32) the report accounted for a decrease in receipts the preceding year by the fact of an unexpended balance in the treasury.*

That a treasury surplus should have been allowed to continue year after year is difficult to understand. That it operated as a damper on increase of giving was evident—members excusing themselves for meagre contributions by saying that the Society had more money than it could use. The surplus is less understandable in view of McKendree's expressed conviction that the missionary operations of the Church should be expanded, and the further fact that support of many of the missionaries was precarious and, at best, insufficient. For example, at the November, 1824, Holston Conference, James Y. Crawford was sent "as a missionary to the Cumberland Mountain."⁶⁹ A collection of \$22.50 was taken at the Conference session for his benefit. The reports of the Treasurer of the Missionary Society for 1824-25, and 1825-26 show no payment to him. That he received any additional missionary support is not evident. Again, at the session of the Mississippi Conference in December, 1825, John R. Lambuth was appointed to the Mobile Mission. He was reappointed in 1826.⁷⁰ At that session of the Conference he reported "most discouraging difficulties growing out of the general irreligion of the place," and he had received so little support that he felt impelled to appeal to the Conference for aid. In response, one preacher out of his meagre stipend of \$100. contributed \$10.⁷¹ Under date of February 13, 1827, for the first time, an item appears in the Treasurer's account, "To cash paid Rev. John R. Lambeth, two drafts for the benefit of the Mobile Mission, order of Bishop Roberts, \$65.50."⁷² This is the only record of payment made to him by the Missionary Society.

Although receipts were gradually increasing it was evident to the missionary leaders that the income of the Society was not commensurate with needs and opportunities, either at home or abroad. More intensive cultivation was required and the Board was gradually feeling its way toward more effective promotion. On March 18, 1829, a resolution was proposed requesting the Bishops to appoint the Rev. John N. Maffitt as a General Agent for the promotion

* "From the commencement of the society until some time in the year 1827, there had been a considerable balance reported, from year to year, in the treasury. In the course of that year the managers found that their treasury was exhausted, and they therefore made an appeal to the friends of missions. . . . This had the desired effect in awakening a more general interest . . . and one and another came forward . . . offering to be one of ninety who should pay \$100. each. . . . Unhappily for the pecuniary interests of the society, the managers, notwithstanding they had authorized drafts on their treasury to the amount of \$20,000. were again compelled to report a large balance in hand. This abated the zeal of those who had begun to be forward in this good work. . . ."—Nathan Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions* . . . , p. 247.

of the Missionary, Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies, the Publishing Fund and periodical publications. The resolution was carried over from one meeting to another for a full year but finally on April 21, 1830, was passed in revised form, calling upon Bishop Elijah Hedding to appoint Mr. Maffitt as "an Agent for the Missionary Society."⁷³ For some reason the Bishop did not see fit to make the appointment.

At intervals the question of authorizing the Annual Conferences and the Bishops to employ Missionary Society agents for promotion of missions was raised in meetings of the Board.* Finally, after several proposals had been voted down, on April 25, 1832, the Board adopted a resolution recommending that the General Conference so amend the constitution that a Bishop, together with an Annual Conference, on the recommendation of the Board shall have authority to appoint an "agent or agents whenever deemed expedient for the more efficient prosecution of the cause of missions."⁷⁴ The General Conference approved the recommendation, and within two or three years several of the Annual Conferences had such Missionary Agents. Milton Jamison was appointed Conference Missionary Agent at the 1834 session of the Kentucky Conference and in the same year Daniel Hall received a like appointment at the Virginia Conference.⁷⁵

Until 1836-37 the Missionary Society had no serious financial problems. A small debt was reported at the sixteenth anniversary (May 11, 1835) but by borrowing \$4,000. it was possible to meet all drafts upon the treasury and at the end of the year 1835-36 a balance again remained in the treasury.⁷⁶ But the next year complications arose. Increased funds were required to support the foreign missions in Liberia and the Oregon Territory.⁷⁷ In addition, the effects of the nationwide depression had begun to be seriously felt. In 1837 the currency situation was such that the Book Concern in New York took unprecedented action in refusing to accept Mississippi currency in payment for books and periodicals sold through the New Orleans branch, asking that funds due be invested in cotton at New Orleans and the cotton shipped to the publishers.⁷⁸ A substantial increase in income was again registered in 1837-38 so that the Corresponding Secretary was able to report at its close that sufficient funds had been received to "help to relieve the Society from its embarrassments and enable the Managers to redeem their plighted faith."⁷⁹ But conditions grew steadily worse. Despite the continued depression income was increased, but not in sufficient volume to provide for the de-

* Some of the Annual Conferences had not waited either for General Conference or Board approval. At the 1825 session of the Virginia Conference the Rev. John Early was appointed Missionary Agent. His duties, as defined by the Conference, were to promote the organization of branch societies; to stimulate existing Societies; to take collections for missionary purposes; and "to employ suitable missionaries [wherever needed] whenever it is within his power . . . and to report at the next session his success and the condition of the missionary cause." (W. W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, p. 710.) Again, at the Baltimore Conference in 1829 Thomas I. Dorsey was appointed "Conference Missionary and agent for the Seminary."—*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 22.

mands of an expanding program. The *Twenty-second Annual Report* (1840–41) stated that the difficulty of securing adequate funds had been greater than at any former period in the history of the Society.⁸⁰ On October 21, 1840, the Corresponding Secretary presented to the managers a joint letter from Bishops Soule and Hedding recommending “that in view of the present condition of the Treasury no additional missionaries be employed.”⁸¹ A year later (November 10, 1842) the Treasurer reported that “the state of the Treasury had become alarming”; that he could not “consistently ask farther aid from the banks, nor can the Book Concern lend any more.”⁸² The debt had increased from \$20,000. in 1839–40 to \$43,783.15 in 1841–42.⁸³ In one month⁸⁴ of 1841 (October) the Treasurer had reported an overdraft of \$50,207.36.* The managers decided there was no prospect of increased income or possibility of reduction of debt without retrenchment. Determined that reduction of appropriations should be made, at a meeting held on October 20, 1841:

Resolved . . . That it is not expedient to make any further appropriations for the support of our missions in South America, and that the Bishop having charge of those missions be respectfully requested to recall the missionaries at Buenos Ayres and Rio Janeiro, with as little delay as possible, and that the missionaries be instructed to dispose of the property belonging to the Missionary Society on the best terms possible, and account to this Board for the proceeds.

Resolved . . . That the school in Buenos Ayres under the direction of this Board be discontinued, and that notice thereof be immediately given to the Superintendent of that station.⁸⁵

With drastic retrenchment carried through,† the close of the next fiscal year (1842–43) saw the indebtedness reduced to \$35,583.67, leading the Corresponding Secretary to say in his Annual Report “in view of the pecuniary embarrassments of the whole country, and the consequent difficulty in collecting funds we have . . . cause to ‘thank God. . . .’”⁸⁶ By this time the financial tide in the national economy had definitely turned and by the close of the fiscal year 1843–44 the Secretary stated that “more than three-fourths of the debt reported last year has been paid . . . [and we have] no longer any cause for discouragement.”‡

* Other missionary societies were similarly embarrassed at this time. The treasury of the Baptist Home Missionary Society was under such pressure as to render “it doubtful whether it would be possible for them to pay the small stipends they had promised to the poor, toiling missionaries all over the West. . . . Under a special commission for this purpose . . . [John Mason Peck] hastened among the more able churches of both Missouri and Illinois, and his importunate pleadings for help—help in a pressing exigency—were so far responded to that the immediate distress was relieved. . . . At just this juncture [1844], also, missionary meetings were held successively in several of the Baptist churches in Philadelphia, to listen to appeals for the Foreign Mission Board, already forty thousand dollars in debt, and the current contributions (by the withdrawal of the South) were steadily and largely diminishing.”—Rufus Babcock, Ed., *Memoir of John Mason Peck* . . . , pp. 273, 337.

† The financial difficulties of the Board during the years 1841–43 were undoubtedly also a major factor in the changing attitude of the Board toward the Oregon Mission. See II, ch. III.

‡ Annual receipts and expenditures of the Missionary Society for the Missions, including office administrative expense for the entire period 1819–20 to 1843–44, were as follows:

While the missionary debt was undoubtedly due in part to the paralyzing economic depression of 1836-43, there were other factors. The missionary giving of the Church during the decades of the twenties and the thirties had not kept pace with the increase of membership and the higher economic status of many members. The expansion of the Annual Conferences in the West and the Southwest paralleled the rapidly expanding frontier, creating new missionary needs; and a deepening sense of obligation for foreign missions, resulting in a steadily increasing personnel in the fields occupied, called for ever larger appropriations. Meanwhile the Asbury tradition of a penny-a-week for missions continued to dominate the thinking of preachers and lay members.* Neither in the episcopacy nor in the Board of Managers did the urgently needed educational and promotional leadership emerge. The Missionary Society had been in existence for sixteen years before any suggestion of a comprehensive plan for raising missionary funds was made. At a meeting of the Board on May 20, 1835, Timothy Merritt† offered a resolution calling for a committee "to prepare a digested, uniform plan, to be recommended throughout the whole Church" for raising funds for domestic and foreign missions.⁸⁷ A committee was ordered consisting of Timothy Merritt, Beverly Waugh, Lancaster S. Burling, Nathan Bangs, and Dr. James L. Phelps,⁸⁸ but so far as the records reveal nothing significant came of the move. Two years later (July 26, 1837), facing an overdraft of \$5,000. a Finance Committee—the first in the history of the Board—was authorized "to confer with the Treasurer and aid him in raising an amount of funds sufficient to meet the existing wants of the Society."⁸⁹ When four more years had passed, the threat of financial disaster impending, a committee to whom was referred the problem of "means of securing a regular supply [of funds] to the Missionary Treasury by a uniform plan of operation throughout the connexion" brought to the Board a report emphasizing the need of some systematic plan of giving, since:

	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>
1819-20	\$ 823.04	\$ 85.76¼	1831-32	\$ 11,397.80	\$ 12,916.26
1820-21	2,328.76¼	407.87	1832-33	17,097.05	20,117.27
1821-22	2,547.38¾	1,781.40	1833-34	35,700.15	31,361.89
1822-23	5,427.13¾	3,740.82½	1834-35	30,492.21	38,530.98
1823-24	3,589.91½	4,996.14½	1835-36	61,337.81	55,685.85
1824-25	4,140.16¾	4,704.21¾	1836-37	57,096.05	66,536.85
1825-26	4,964.11	5,510.85½	1837-38	95,110.75	90,105.36
1826-27	6,812.49	7,379.42	1838-39	135,521.94	103,664.58
1827-28	6,245.17	8,106.18	1839-40	116,941.90	146,498.58
1828-29	14,176.11	9,233.75	1840-41	119,548.16	124,879.92
1829-30	13,128.63	10,544.88	1841-42	105,281.98	146,035.95
1830-31	9,950.57	11,497.60	1842-43	109,452.17	105,787.84
			1843-44	94,179.05	68,396.80

* Evidence of this is found in actions of Annual Conferences. The South Carolina Conference at its session in January, 1821, "resolved to make weekly cent collections within the limits of the Conference for the purpose of sending missionaries among the Indians or elsewhere." (*Second Ann. Rep., M. S.* [1821-22], unpagcd ms.) In 1842 the Erie Conference adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, that we carry into effect as soon as possible the penny-a-week collections to replenish the Missionary treasury. . . ."—*Minutes of the First Twenty Sessions of the Erie Annual Conference . . . 1836-1855* p. 72.

† Timothy Merritt (1775-1845), prominent member of the New England Conference, an able preacher and author of several books, from 1832 to 1835 was Assistant Editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, and resided in New York City.

under the present system, or rather want of system, very few comparatively contribute anything regularly, not being attached to any missionary society, and being only occasionally reached by some extra effort made at a missionary meeting.

Indeed it is probable that a large proportion of our membership are never solicited even in this way, as missionary meetings are principally held in cities and villages.⁹⁰

The report continued, proposing a plan of uniform organization for "the purpose of supplying a steady stream of benevolence." The plan involved constituting every Circuit and Station of the Church a Missionary Society, auxiliary to the Conference Missionary Auxiliary; and each Class a branch society. Herein, at last, was an organizationally ambitious plan but even so the Board was fainthearted in the matter of setting its goal: the preacher-in-charge to endeavor to get each member of every Class to subscribe one cent per week as a missionary contribution; a committee of "Female Members" at each preaching place to be formed to call upon non-members and get them to subscribe one cent per week or more, and to regularly collect; a missionary meeting to be held at every Sunday appointment once a year with a missionary sermon preached.

Such a plan could not be expected to produce large results, and it is not surprising, three years later, to hear the lament of the Corresponding Secretary that other Churches, with many fewer members, have greatly exceeded the Methodist Church in missionary giving. He continued:

In view of the humiliating fact, that the aggregate amount contributed to the cause of missions . . . during the past year does not exceed twelve cents for each member, who will say that she has discharged her high and holy obligations to the perishing heathen?

No longer could it be said that the members of the Church lacked the means to provide the needed support. The Church, said the Corresponding Secretary, "has vast resources, which to this hour remain undeveloped and untouched."⁹¹ With this statement there were others who fully agreed. Moreover, demonstration was not lacking that when the missionary cause was effectively presented to the people generous response was forthcoming. At the anniversary meeting held on May 11, 1835, in the Greene Street Church, New York City, Willbur Fisk offered an extemporaneous resolution recommending a mission to China, supporting the resolution with "an impressive and eloquent speech," concluding with a proposal that a subscription should be taken in the audience. Cards were circulated and \$1,450. was immediately subscribed. The Rev. John Seys, on furlough from Liberia, followed with a plea for \$500. for the support for one year of "the Rev. A. D. Williams as missionary among the Congoes at King Boatswain's town, in the interior." More than \$600. "was soon subscribed and collected, all parts of the house furnish-

ing some quota of the amount, and a considerable sum being thrown from the gallery." Cash and subscriptions made during this evening totalled \$2,-952.25.⁹² Again, when in 1840 Bishop Waugh announced on the field that the Missionary Society could not continue to support the Texas Mission, the people took the support upon themselves. Bishop Waugh said:

I could not draw upon an indebted treasury lest it might become bankrupt, but there was no dismissal nor withdrawal from the field on that account, for the people said: Give us the ministers of Christ, and we will divide with them the means of our subsistence; and the preachers said, Here are we, under such circumstances, send us.⁹³

Considering the evidence of willingness of preachers and people to respond to the missionary appeal, it would seem that the chief lack at this period was a missionary statesmanship equal to the demands of the changed situation.

As the preceding discussion of administrative plans and procedure has made evident, responsibility for support of Conference missions and missionaries during these years was divided between the Annual Conferences and the Missionary Society. Of the funds raised within the Annual Conferences no uniformity of practice prevailed as to the proportion forwarded to the society and that paid direct to the Conference Missionary or Missionaries. Likewise there was no uniformity as to the proportion of total support of Conference Missionaries supplied by the Missionary Society.

At the second session of the Indiana Conference (October, 1833) the Missionary Committee of the Conference reported "fixing the amount necessary for the support of the [four] Missions," within the Conference at \$275., specifying the missions by name and including "For the Superintendent . . . \$100."⁹⁴ The Missionary Society Treasurer's Account (1833-34) shows, under date of November 15, 1833, cash paid the Rev. James Armstrong, by order of Bishop Soule, for these four missions, \$187., and cash received on the same date from the Indiana Conference Auxiliary Missionary Society, by the Rev. C. W. Ruter, Treasurer, \$187., revealing that in this instance the Board paid to the Conference missions the exact amount received from the Conference Missionary Society.⁹⁵ The next year (1834) the Indiana Conference *Minutes* show that the Missionary Committee presented a report "appropriating the amount necessary for the support of the missions . . ." five in number, \$545. including allowances totalling \$145. for three Superintendents of Missions.⁹⁶ The Board (1834-35) paid drafts on its treasury to the amount of \$368. and received from the Conference only \$52.⁹⁷

This year (1834-35) for the first time the Treasurer's report classified receipts and expenditures by Conferences. In the case of some Conferences the amounts received and expended within an Annual Conference were approxi-

mately equal;* in others much more was expended than received—an outstanding instance being the Mississippi Conference, where \$3,971.30 was expended and from which \$879.92 was received.† From others the amount that came was greatly in excess of that spent, Virginia this year contributing to the Society \$3,346.60 while only \$56.74 was returned for missionary work within its bounds.‡ The proportions varied considerably from year to year. In practically all cases Conference missions were in part self-supporting—in some instances becoming entirely so within one or two years and, in addition, making a contribution to the Missionary Society. At the September, 1830, session of the Ohio Conference, Joseph Hill was appointed to the St. Mary's and Fort Defiance Mission.⁹⁸ At the close of the year he reported:

The people in general on this mission are industrious, liberal, and manifest great affection for those who labor for their spiritual interests. I have received \$50. as quarterage, \$8. for traveling expenses, besides \$25. in donations to purchase me a horse, as I had lost the one I rode. They have also collected \$20. for the improvement of their meeting house. All this, considering their circumstances, in a newly settled country, is certainly doing well, and evinces a strong attachment to the cause of religion.⁹⁹

In September, 1832, William D. R. Trotter was appointed to the Blue River (Illinois) Mission, Quincy District, Peter Cartwright, Presiding Elder and Superintendent of the missions.¹⁰⁰ In September, 1833, Cartwright wrote:

The Blue River Mission has greatly prospered this year. There has been an addition of nearly 200 members, most of whom have professed religion. The mission is organized into a missionary society; and after paying the expenses of the missionary and superintendent, they will forward between seventy and eighty dollars to the missionary fund.¹⁰¹

During the early years of the Missionary Society the major expenditures were for the support of Indian missions—in 1825–26 approximately four-fifths.

POLICY AND PROGRAM OF THE BOARD

The first and most difficult question of policy that confronted the Missionary Society concerned the geographical extent of its operations. The statement of purpose written into its original constitution as Article I, read as follows:

This association shall be denominated *The Missionary . . . Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America* the object of which is to enable the several an-

* From the Holston Conference the Missionary Society received \$245.33, paid \$225.; from South Carolina, received \$3,018.81, paid \$3,139.81; from Kentucky, received \$266.17, paid \$176.50.—Treasurer's Report, *Sixteenth Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1834–35), pp. 27, 34; 28, 35; 26, 34.

† Other examples were Illinois, from which the Society this year received \$521.38, and in which it expended \$2,370.; and Georgia, the Society receiving \$1,188.50 and expending \$2,948.

‡ Other instances: New York contributing \$4,468.17 and receiving \$1,015.92; Baltimore, \$3,551.20 and \$1,458.75; Ohio, \$3,033.43 and \$1,527.30; Troy \$1,312.36 and \$90.

nual Conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labours throughout the United States and elsewhere. . . . ¹⁰²

That a strong missionary consciousness dominated the minds and hearts of many of the leaders of early American Methodism has been made abundantly clear in the preceding chapter. In the thought of the men who were chiefly responsible for bringing the Missionary Society into existence, "elsewhere" meant the farthest bounds of the then-known world. Vision and a sense of obligation for worldwide missionary operations were not lacking but the demands arising from opportunities and needs immediately at hand were compelling, and exhausted the available resources of means and men. Every Methodist itinerant had an unoccupied mission field stretching out beyond the farthest outpost of his Circuit. A dearth of tried and experienced men existed in every Annual Conference. Under date of November 16, 1832, Bishop James O. Andrew wrote to William Capers:

I have never heard the Macedonian cry so loud, and so oft repeated. A district was without an elder and several circuits without preachers in the Missouri conference, which we were earnestly importuned to supply from the Tennessee conference, but we could only send one.¹⁰³

Bishop Joshua Soule in 1833 stated that at almost every Conference there was a deficiency of preachers, with many Circuits left unsupplied and many others requiring two or three supplied with one.¹⁰⁴ At the first session of the Troy Conference (1833), although eighteen men were admitted on trial, and none located, when the Conference adjourned, it lacked nine of the number of preachers needed to supply all its Circuits.¹⁰⁵ A similar situation existed in the Mississippi Conference.¹⁰⁶ On January 15, 1840, the Corresponding Secretary reported to the Board of Managers a letter from Bishop James O. Andrew stating that the Indian missions connected with the Arkansas Conference were "feebly supplied owing to the lack of suitable men."¹⁰⁷ Seeking means of relieving the situation the General Conference of 1836 directed that at each Annual Conference preachers received on trial or admitted into full connection should be asked whether they were willing to devote themselves to missionary work, and that the names of all willing to do so should be reported to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society.¹⁰⁸ While this action may have helped, it did not result in providing the number of candidates needed.

The several aspects of the missionary situation with which the young Church was confronted are graphically set forth in the *Address to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference* adopted by the General Conference of 1824:

We are also following you, though at a humble distance, in your Missionary exertions. But such is the extent, and increasing extent, of our work here, that we cannot find means, or men, for foreign missions. The increase of our population is

perhaps unparalleled; and it is widely scattered over an extensive continent. To keep pace with it, under such circumstances, requires much labour and much privation. In addition to this, the Lord, as you have heard, has opened for us a great and effectual door among the Aborigines of our country. These we dare not neglect. They are our neighbors, and we must minister unto them; they have been injured, and we must make them reparation; they are savages, and must be civilized; heathens and must be converted. All this shall be done if God permit. We have the work much at heart, and hope and pray for success.

A strong case for domestic missions, surely! Nevertheless, except in the matter of time, the General Conference had no disposition to limit its responsibility or to restrict its field of operations. The *Address* continued:

And finally, the way seems to be opening for Missionary exertions in Mexico and South-America.

With these fields of labour in the midst of us, and round about us, you cannot expect us to join you in the great and good work in which you are engaged in the East. Still we hope the time is not far distant when we shall join hands on the Asiatick shores of the Pacifick ocean.¹⁰⁹

The situation of the Missionary Society differed from that of the General Conference. It was not a free agent. The primary right to initiate missions had been given, by its charter, to the Annual Conferences and the Bishops. The Society could only recommend. The sense of obligation to undertake one or more overseas missions was in the minds of the managers of the Society from the beginning. Yet since the bulk of the funds came from the Conference Auxiliaries, and the branch societies under the Conference Auxiliaries, subject to draft by the Bishops for the support of Conference missions, there was little that the Board could do but await the action of Bishops and Conferences. It was free to keep the overseas fields before the minds of the Bishops and leaders of the Conferences. And this it did.

In a meeting of the Board as early as January 19, 1825, Nathan Bangs moved that the Corresponding Secretary be directed to inform the Bishops that "the state of the funds . . . is such as to justify sending a missionary" to Liberia, and respectfully to request that an appointment be made.¹¹⁰ Three months later a similar action was taken regarding South America, the Board putting itself on record as considering "it very desirable that such a mission should be established."¹¹¹ After waiting six months for reply, another motion was passed by the Board¹¹² requesting the Corresponding Secretary to write again to the Bishops "to ascertain from them whether they have taken any measures to send a mission to South America, or to the Colony of Africans at Liberia. . . ." * The *Minutes* contain no record of reply from any of the

* "The form of this action shows the Bishops as having the initiative, the Society being the collecting and banking agent. Every fresh study of the situation shows the hindrance to effort in foreign work by the constitutional dependence upon episcopal action."—Frank Mason North, ms. notes on Liberia in the Archives of the Division of Foreign Missions.

Bishops. At a meeting of the Board on November 21, 1827, the Corresponding Secretary reported having received a letter from G. P. Disosway of Petersburg, Virginia, stating that one John J. Raymond was willing "to offer himself to the Society as a missionary to Africa." The Corresponding Secretary stated that he had advised Mr. Raymond "to correspond with the Bishop on the subject."¹¹³

A second limitation affecting expansion into foreign fields was the lack of suitable candidates. In assigning young men "to break new ground" on the frontier the Bishops felt that they were justified in taking the risk involved in appointing untried and untrained volunteers. They were appointed "on trial." The sifting process was sternly enforced and as a rule weak and unsuitable men were soon eliminated. Some, as we have seen, did not last beyond their first or second Quarterly Conference. Many were discontinued at the end of their first year, and many others failed to be admitted into full connection at the end of the second year. But the appointment of a man to a foreign field, where during the period of the founding of the mission he would have no supervision, and where he was expected to remain for three, five, or ten years was quite a different matter. In addition, experienced men were not as ready to volunteer for the foreign field—especially one far removed—as they were for the frontier beyond the Alleghenies or, later, beyond the Mississippi. It was eight years after the Board of Managers passed the first resolution informing the Bishops that funds were available for Liberia and asking "that a suitable person be selected for that purpose and sent," before an approved candidate was found—Melville B. Cox. At that, the missionary was a preacher in feeble health, known to have tuberculosis, who went to Africa hoping against hope that the climate would alleviate the disease.¹¹⁴ Previous to 1832 no candidate for Africa could be found whose qualifications were satisfactory* and when agreement was finally reached that Cox should be sent the action was taken with many misgivings and against the vigorous protests of some.

The situation as regards China was similar. Referring to the fund that had been pledged for beginning work in that land the Corresponding Secretary reported in 1836 that, although efforts had been made both by the managers of the Society and by the Bishops, "the men have not yet been found who are willing to embark in this undertaking."¹¹⁵ One of the difficulties was that no churchwide agency existed charged with responsibility for selection and training of missionary personnel. This lack continued until long after the close of the present period.

* Nathan Bangs: "Hitherto [1832] . . . the bishops had not been able to select such a man for the work as they considered suitable. Some had offered and been rejected, and those who were considered best qualified, were unwilling to go."—*History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, IV, 110.

Both in the Indian missions and in foreign missions the founding and maintenance of schools very early became an established part of the Board program. In fact, the desire and request of certain Indian tribes for schools for their children was one cause of the establishment of missions among them. In the case of the Liberia Mission it became evident in the very beginning that if the enterprise was to be permanent schools were necessary. Soon after his arrival in Liberia, Melville B. Cox urged the founding of an academy. While not averse to an academy the Board felt that it should be established and maintained by the colonists, but authorized the opening of primary schools* "in connection with all the missions undertaken for the benefit of the native Africans."¹¹⁶ On September 13, 1836, the Corresponding Secretary informed the Board that the Bishop had appointed the Rev. John Dempster as a missionary to Buenos Aires.¹¹⁷ Within a few months after his arrival on the field he sent back an earnest plea for a teacher and in response the Board sent out a graduate of Wesleyan University.† In a letter dated November 20, 1838, Dempster announced that he had "opened a school with a fair prospect of success."¹¹⁸ In the fall of 1838 Dempster reported having visited "Monte Video," Uruguay, and urged the sending of a missionary "in the double capacity of a school teacher and a preacher of the gospel." In reporting the request to the Church the Board announced that "a suitable person has been selected and appointed to that place."¹¹⁹

Granted that the scope of Methodist missions should embrace both evangelization and education, in what more specific terms should these be defined? In the endeavor to determine the answer to this question a long-continued process of discussion and experimentation was begun.

In stating that the Board sent out two laymen to the Oregon Mission within a few months following the outgoing of the first ministerial missionaries, Abel Stevens adds, "for it was deemed expedient to introduce the arts of civilized labor among these remote savages."¹²⁰ Throughout the remaining years of the present period the Board struggled with these problems. Nor did its close see them solved. We witness the process in the record of Board actions—though recorded without account of the accompanying discussions. At the meeting of the Board on December 2, 1835, Timothy Merritt moved: "That two farmers (from our Western frontier, if they can be obtained) be sent to the aid of the Mission . . . to teach the natives the art of agriculture." This motion was amended by substituting the words "a farmer and a carpenter" for the "two farmers." Later in the same session the vote was reconsidered and the

* On Jan. 15, 1834, the Board adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, that the Corresponding Secretary be requested to write to Bro. Spaulding, the Missionary at Liberia advising him to use all practicable and prudent means for the establishment of schools at Cape Mount or elsewhere within the bounds of his mission. . . ."—*Minutes, B.M.*, II, 215.

† See p. 348.

amendment was rejected.¹²¹ Herein is to be seen the beginning of agricultural missions in the foreign program of the Methodist Church. On December 6, 1838, the Board unanimously voted to reenforce the Oregon Mission by five additional missionaries (preachers), four farmers, six mechanics, one physician, and one missionary steward, with their wives—an action that seems clearly to envisage a broad and comprehensive program. Five years later the *Minutes* record¹²² that the same Board—with certain changes in its personnel—instructed the new Superintendent

to ascertain as soon as possible after his arrival in Oregon . . . whether the mercantile, agricultural and mechanical operations . . . are necessary to . . . successful operation [of the mission] . . . and should he become satisfied that these secular operations are *detrimental*, rather than *useful* to the Mission, that he is hereby instructed to use his discretion in dismissing any surplus hands now in its employ, thereby giving to our Mission as far as practicable, a strictly spiritual character.*

Another question of policy which arose early in the history of the Missionary Society concerned the ownership of property in foreign lands—its purchase; and the erection of mission houses, schools, and churches. The question was precipitated by certain communications, dealing with property matters, received in 1833 from Melville B. Cox and Rufus Spaulding. The letter from Cox announced that he had purchased a mission house at Monrovia.¹²³ The action of the Board sanctioned “the proceedings of Bro. Cox in the purchase . . . although they [the members of the Board] do not approve of purchases of this character being made in general, without first consulting the Board.”¹²⁴ Spaulding’s communication stated that he had “made a proposition to some of the officers of the American Colonization Society for a donation of some lots of land for building houses of worship, mission and parsonage houses.” The proposition was favorably received, the Board voting to “make application to the Managers of the Colonization Society, for a grant of building lots for the above purposes in every place where missions may be established within the bounds of their Colony.”¹²⁵ These actions, taken, it is recorded, without a dissenting vote, within twelve months of the sending of Cox to Liberia, committed the Missionary Society to the acquisition and maintenance of property in its own right in foreign fields. Many problems affecting property titles and control arose later, which in their determination both expanded and modified the original action, but the fundamental policy of property ownership and control by the Society was thus early decided.

Though probably not foreseen when the acquisition of land and buildings was first sanctioned, the action regarding property ownership in Liberia

* It should be noted as having a bearing upon the problem of evolving policy that: (1) only the preachers were designated as “missionaries,” the others apparently being thought of as *employees* of the mission, though expected to engage in processes of teaching and training; (2) during this interim the mission had lost to some extent its original character as a distinctively Indian mission; (3) the Board was at this time under the pressure of diminished income.

soon led to the realization that the incorporation of the Missionary Society was desirable—perhaps even required—in order that:

the Society should be known in law for the purpose of holding so much real estate as may be necessary for carrying on its operations, and also to enable it to recover and retain any bequests which benevolent individuals might give to the Society.

. . . ¹²⁶

In the *Twentieth Annual Report* (1838–39) announcement was made that application had been submitted to the Legislature of the state of New York, and granted by that body, for an Act of Incorporation.*

Early in the history of the Missionary Society another question of policy arose that was destined to recur in various forms through many decades. The question concerned the propriety and right of individual and group donors of designating the particular mission to which a contribution should be allocated. The Young Men's Missionary Society of New York City assumed the entire support of Melville B. Cox, missionary to Liberia.† Bishop Elijah Hedding in a letter informing the Board of Managers of the appointment of Rufus Spaulding and Samuel Osgood Wright as missionaries to Liberia stated that the Missionary Society would be expected to provide the support of Spaulding but that the Young Men's Missionary Society of Boston engages "to bear the expense of Brother Wright."¹²⁷ By 1833 the practice of making contributions for designated missions had become so general that serious difficulties had been created, and a special committee was appointed to deal with the problem. The committee's resolution, adopted by the Board, will be recognized as having a very modern sound in its ingenious way of saying both yes and no at the same time:‡

Resolved, 1. That this board of managers view with pleasure and gratitude the enterprise and activity of the several Societies auxiliary to the parent Society, in the efficient aid they afford in the great missionary cause; and that although the selecting of particular missions for the specific appropriation of their funds is not inconsistent with the letter of the constitution, yet the managers prefer that the funds raised by auxiliary Societies should be placed without restriction or

* Passed April 9, 1839. The object of the corporation was stated to be: To "diffuse more generally the blessing of education, civilization, and Christianity throughout the United States and elsewhere." —*Twentieth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1838–39), p. 22.

† Appeals were made by the Y.M.M.S. for contributions, not only to members of the Society, but also "to all who delight in doing good, and wish to share . . . in sustaining this African mission," to be sent to officers of the Society or to the Treasurer of the parent Missionary Society with the promise that they would be "faithfully appropriated to this noble object."—Gershom F. Cox, *Remains of Melville B. Cox*, pp. 220ff.

‡ This becomes even more evident if the paragraph introducing the resolution is read: The "managers have been in the habit from the beginning, of recognizing auxiliaries that have claimed the right and exercised the privilege of making specific appropriations of their funds . . . [from] the constitution . . . it does not appear that this practice is prohibited . . . perhaps it is fair to infer . . . [from Art. 10 that] auxiliaries should submit the disposal of their funds without restriction or limitation. . . . But it has not been so interpreted . . . therefore it is thought to be unwise . . . either to refuse the cooperation of such efficient auxiliaries as prefer selecting a particular mission . . . [or] may hereafter desire to do so . . . nevertheless [it is] desirable . . . and preferable, as it will save much labor and prevent the embarrassment arising from collisions among auxiliaries themselves . . . that all auxiliaries should pay their funds into the Treasury . . . to be appropriated in the equitable manner provided for by the Constitution. . . ."

limitation at the disposal of the parent Society, to be appropriated as its constitution directs.

Resolved, 2. That though this is desirable, yet in case any auxiliary, under all the circumstances should judge it best for the interests of the cause to designate a special mission or missions to which its funds shall be applied, such designation shall be respected and observed as far as practicable.¹²⁸

Needless to say that this amorphous resolution made but slight contribution to solution of the problem. Designated gifts continued to come. Under date of March 27, 1843, William Capers wrote that a proposal had been made by the South Carolina Conference

to raise five hundred Dollars, or more, for the special purpose of sending an additional missionary into the Goulah Country [Africa], with the understanding that that sum was necessary for his support one year, and should be repeated by anniversary collections in future, if the missionary should be sent promptly & continued in the field on the faith of this pledge, and on this proposition the sum of *five hundred and ninety-five dollars* was raised on the spot, *four hundred* of it being contributed by the preachers of the Conference.¹²⁹

It is of interest to note some of the matters on which the Board during these early years either enunciated no policy or decided adversely on proposals which in more recent decades have become universally accepted policies. For example, there was no uniform salary scale for missionaries. The amount to be paid each missionary was determined by the Board subsequent to appointment, and the allowance varied somewhat widely.*

The Board was opposed in the beginning to the establishment of a permanent fund. When \$20,000 was left to the Society, the executor stipulating that it should be invested, the income only to be used annually, the proposal was rejected.† This policy, however, as has been seen, was soon changed.

"To make collections for missionary purposes" was early declared to be one of the duties of missionaries. Accordingly, preceding their outgoing, and during their furloughs, missionaries were expected to travel, make addresses on their fields, and raise funds for their Missions.‡ In their *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1833-34) the Board of Managers gave major credit for increased receipts to the cultivation efforts of the Liberia and Oregon missionaries:

* For example, the appropriation made for John Seys, appointed to the Liberia Mission in 1834, was "Discipline allowance, quarterage, \$200.; allowance for five children, \$500." (Ms. *Minutes, B.M.*, II, 230.) When Seys was reappointed as Superintendent of the mission in 1843 his salary was fixed at \$1,000., plus house rent. (*Ibid.*, IV, 287.) On Nov. 20, 1843, the Board fixed "the allowance of Bro. [George] Gary," as Superintendent of the Oregon Mission, at \$500., "including the Board and tuition of two children whom he leaves in this country" plus an undetermined allowance for "table and traveling expenses." (*Ibid.*, IV, 307.) The allowance fixed for Martin Ruter in 1837 on his appointment to the Republic of Texas was \$750. For the support of Abel Stevens, appointed a missionary to Texas in 1838, the appropriation was "Salary for himself and wife at the rate of, per annum, \$600. . . ." (*Ibid.*, III, 134.) Outfit and traveling expenses were additional.

† The action was: "that it is incompatible with the objects of this Society, as well as with the genius of all benevolent institutions to make permanent investments of any part of its funds."—*Ibid.*, II, 159.

‡ Action of the Board, July 16, 1834, "Resolved . . . that the Rev. [John] Seys, be desired to devote himself to the missionary work as soon as practicable, and that he travel under the direction of the Treasurer, and make collections, to aid the Mission in which he is employed."—*Ibid.*, p. 230.

previously to leaving our shores [they] traveled extensively . . . held missionary meetings, and took up collections for the support of their respective enterprises. These movements have tended to awaken a missionary spirit in many new places, and to rekindle it in others where it had begun to languish, and thus to draw forth munificent donations for the support of this common interest.¹³⁰

In a letter to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society, Rufus Spaulding reports collections for the Liberia Mission in seven New England towns and cities during December, 1832, and January and February, 1833, totalling \$178.82.*

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Need for full-time executive leadership was keenly felt within the Board as early as 1826. Finally, at the regular monthly meeting of the Board on October 11, 1833, Willbur Fisk, president of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, stating that the operations of the Missionary Society had so increased in extent and importance as to require an executive officer who should devote his entire time to the missionary cause, introduced a resolution† providing that the Corresponding Secretary of the Board should be a full-time executive officer.¹³¹ As was almost invariably the case when an important proposal was made, the resolution was referred to a special committee for consideration and later report. On November 20, the committee reported such a Secretary to be desirable, but "doubted the constitutional competency of the Board" to authorize the election of a paid executive, and recommended that a request be laid "before the next General Conference."¹³² The *Seventeenth Annual Report* (1835-36) announced that the Board had "adopted an amended Constitution, recommending to the ensuing General Conference the appointment of a resident Corresponding Secretary, whose time and labors may be devoted exclusively to the concerns of this society."¹³³ The General Conference adopted this recommendation.¹³⁴

When the time came for the election the thought of many immediately turned to Nathan Bangs. His six years of missionary work in Upper and Lower Canada had acquainted him with the lot of the missionary. He knew its privations and rewards, its perils and triumphs. In Canada he had come in intimate contact with missionary work among the Indians. For sixteen years he had borne office in the Society—eight years as Treasurer and eight years (on part-time and without salary) as Corresponding Secretary. He had written every Annual Report from 1820 to 1836. He was the author of the first history of the missions of American Methodism. While he perhaps lacked

* Places and amounts were as follows: Abington, Mass., \$15.; Scituate, Mass., \$12.; Dorchester, Mass., \$20.; Duxbury, Mass., \$15.64; Providence, R. I., \$37.10; Ipswich, Mass., \$13.; Dover, N. H., \$28.47; Great Falls, Sommersworth, Mass., \$37.61.—Letter printed in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1833), 31 (March 29), 123.

† As an ordained minister who, by payment of the membership fee, had become a member of the Missionary Society, Willbur Fisk was an *ex officio* member of the Board of Managers. This was one of the few occasions when he attended a meeting of the Board.

somewhat in creativity and imagination, he possessed vigor and breadth of mind, intellectual strength, indefatigable energy, and marked solidity of character. Obviously he was the man for the place.¹³⁵ On May 24, 1836, he was elected by the General Conference resident Corresponding Secretary.¹³⁶

Almost immediately the operations of the Board showed effects of full-time executive leadership. The *Eighteenth Annual Report*, undoubtedly written by the Corresponding Secretary, reveals Dr. Bangs' innate modesty in the restraint of its statement: in consequence of the changes made by General Conference "less embarrassments have been felt than heretofore in conducting the affairs of the Society, and it is hoped that increased energies have been infused into some departments of our work."¹³⁷ Financially, the years following Bangs' election were among the most trying the country had ever known, as has been noted, but despite extreme fiscal difficulties the funds of the Society actually doubled during the quadrennium.

So impressive, in fact, were the effects of full-time executive leadership that the 1840 General Conference was led to make provision for three co-ordinate Corresponding Secretaries—one to be resident Secretary in New York, one in the South, and one in the West. Nathan Bangs, William Capers,* and Edward R. Ames were elected, to each of whom a proportionate section of country was assigned within which they were expected to travel, hold missionary meetings, preach on missions, attend Annual Conferences, and take up collections in aid of missionary work.¹³⁸

In 1840–41 a crucial situation developed in the affairs of Wesleyan University, on account of the illness of President Stephen Olin. In the emergency the trustees turned to Nathan Bangs, and at a meeting of the Board of Managers on January 22, 1841, he announced to the Board that he had assented to "an urgent call to preside over the University" under the express understanding that he was to devote only a part of his time to his university duties until a successor might be elected Corresponding Secretary. In February he was elected President of Wesleyan, and on May 19 tendered his formal resignation as Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society.† His resig-

* The activities of William Capers are said to have entailed "protracted absences from home, and fatiguing routes of travel." In the spring of 1841, Dr. Capers made an extensive tour through Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, making addresses in the principal cities. In the autumn "he made another three months tour, through the Carolinas and Virginia." In April (1842) he visited the missions to the Negroes in South Carolina and then went to New York for the anniversary meeting of the Missionary Society. He wrote numerous articles on missions for the *Southern Christian Advocate*. In the fall and winter of 1843–44 he made a long western tour, being absent from home nearly five months.—William M. Wightman, Ed., *Life of William Capers*, pp. 378ff.

† Nathan Bangs (1778–1862) was a native of Connecticut. He was converted in 1800, and in 1802 admitted on trial in the New York Conference and appointed a missionary to Upper Canada. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 101.) We cannot agree with J. M. Reid that Nathan Bangs "deserves to be considered the father of the missionary work of the Methodist Episcopal Church." (*Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 29.) Missions were indigenous to Methodism. It is more accurate to say with Frank Mason North that "as in no other, American Methodism found in Nathan Bangs the inspiring and molding forces which gave [organizational] form to her missionary purpose." (Unpublished ms. notes.) To him the Missionary Society owed much for its maintenance during its early years. It is a tribute to his diligence and indefatigable industry that this service was rendered while he was carrying other heavy responsibilities: 1819–20, Presiding Elder, New York District;

nation was accepted on the same date "with appreciation for his faithful and diligent discharge of the arduous duties devolving upon him, and for the valuable services he has rendered to the missionary cause."¹³⁹

A committee of the Board in reviewing his service stated that during his term as Executive Secretary he had traveled in the service of the Missionary Society more than eleven thousand miles; had visited ten of the Annual Conferences—some of them two or three times; had delivered 134 missionary sermons and addresses in ten different states and in this way had been instrumental in bringing into the treasury \$13,427. It was principally due to his efforts that the receipts of the Society had increased from \$62,749. in the first year of his administration to \$135,521. in the third, "and this, too, notwithstanding the unprecedented prostration of the times."¹⁴⁰ At the anniversary meeting held on May 24, 1841, he was presented a gift of \$100. "as a token of respect for . . . [his] eminent services."¹⁴¹

The election of a Corresponding Secretary, according to the constitution of the Society and the *Discipline*, in the event of an interim vacancy, devolved upon the New York Annual Conference. The Rev. Charles Pitman* of the New Jersey Conference was elected. His salary was fixed by the Board at \$1,300., exclusive of house rent. He did not bring to the service of the Board a high order of administrative ability, but he had a pleasant personality, and was re-elected by the General Conferences of 1844 and 1848. His "eloquent sermons and addresses were everywhere an inspiration to the Church."¹⁴²

GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MISSIONARY OPERATIONS

It must not be presumed that the progress in missionary operations during these years, either in extent or in form satisfied the hopes and ambitions of the leaders of the Church. From various quarters came expressions of disappointment and dissatisfaction. The limited, and in some cases utterly inadequate missionary support, bore heavily on the minds of mission administrators and Presiding Elders.

In 1823 Jacob Young was Presiding Elder of the Lancaster District, Ohio Conference. He visited the Wyandot Mission, aiding in the organization of the school. He was deeply disturbed to find the family of the missionary-in-

1820-28, Book Agent (chief executive officer of the Methodist Book Concern); 1827-29, Corresponding Secretary of the American Bible Society; 1828-32, Editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*; 1832-36, "Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and of our books generally." During these same years he was engaged in writing the first two volumes of his *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*. In 1833, following the resignation of John P. Durbin as Editor of the *Christian Advocate*, Dr. Bangs again became its Editor, in addition to editing the *Quarterly Review*. Dr. Bangs was President of Wesleyan University only eighteen months, retiring from the presidency in August, 1842, to make possible the re-election of Stephen Olin whose health had sufficiently recovered to enable him to take up the position he had earlier relinquished. (Stephen Olin, *Life and Letters of Stephen Olin*, II, 76f.) He died on May 3, 1862, one day after his eighty-fourth birthday.

* Charles Pitman (1796-1854), a native of New Jersey, in 1818 was admitted on trial in the Philadelphia Conference and appointed to the Trenton Circuit (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 303, 316.) In 1839 he transferred to the New Jersey Conference to become pastor at Trenton. Before his election as Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society he served as Presiding Elder of the East Jersey, West Jersey, and Trenton Districts.

charge and the teachers of the school "almost destitute of bread, meat, or vegetables." He returned to his District, stopping en route at the homes of members of the Church, soliciting provisions and sending them back to the school. At Columbus he called on Governor Allen Trimble,* described the situation to him, and secured his permission to hold a public meeting in the Hall of the Legislature. He gained the assent of the Speakers of the two houses for a joint meeting, described what the Methodists were doing for the Wyandot Nation, "what we intended to do . . . made a fair statement of their present condition . . . appointed the Speakers of the two houses collectors, and raised a large collection." With the money he bought 100 bushels of wheat, "had it ground at Ream's Mill . . . sold the bran and shorts to pay for flour barrels . . . went to Zanesville and begged from door to door . . . for meat and other [provisions]." When he had finished he had gathered for the mission school twenty barrels of flour and a quantity of other supplies.¹⁴³

The state of affairs did not satisfy the Board of Managers of the Society. In making their third Annual Report the best that they could say was that the impulse of their work had been "felt more or less strongly from the centre to the circumference of our connection" and that, everything considered, it was only reasonable to expect that "progress would be slow."¹⁴⁴ But this complacent statement did not fully express the feeling of all the managers. Some frankly recognized lack of efficiency in the manner and extent of Board administration and sought improvement. At the June 21, 1826, meeting, a resolution offered by Lancaster S. Burling, the Recording Secretary, declared that Board administration in certain particulars was "altogether unsatisfactory."¹⁴⁵

If the Board was not satisfied with the progress being made, neither were the Bishops. In December, 1824, Bishop McKendree took occasion to write Bishops Roberts and Soule:

Can you not devise some means by which our people . . . can be more effectually roused to the importance of sustaining and enlarging our field of missionary operations? Would it not be well to converse freely with the Presiding Elders on the subject, and strive to excite them to use their best efforts within their respective limits to raise societies and collect funds? or would it answer better to appoint suitable persons to travel and raise funds exclusively for this object?¹⁴⁶

Four years later, in the Episcopal Address, commending the Missionary Society "as a very efficient auxiliary to our itinerant system," the Bishops recommended that it be made a subject of inquiry "whether it be necessary to adopt any further measures to render this important institution more extensive and harmonious in its membership, and more abundant and permanent in its resources," and further, what measures, if any, "will be best calculated to promote these desirable ends."¹⁴⁷

* Allen Trimble (1783-1870) was governor of Ohio, 1821-30. He was a native of Virginia and an earnest member of the Methodist Church.

Among leaders of the Church not officially related either to the missions or to the Missionary Society there were those who were deeply concerned, feeling that much more should be done than was being accomplished. One such was Stephen Olin. Writing in 1834 he declared:

The truth is, no comprehensive plan of missionary operations has yet been devised. If little has been done, it is because little has been attempted. We have bestowed a kindly attention upon those cases of spiritual destitution which have thrust themselves into our path, and left the woe that was out of sight to its own helplessness.¹⁴⁸

The back-lying difficulty, Olin felt, was that the great majority of the lay members of the Church had not become partakers, with the Circuit Riders, of the missionary spirit and passion. There was no lack, he asserted, of means but the gifts and sacrifices of the people had been so disproportionate—even to those of the most lukewarm of the other leading denominations—"as clearly to demonstrate that the cause has not yet come home to the heart of the Church." Many of the local churches were indifferent. When Dr. Elijah White of Havana, New York, offered himself to the Missionary Society for service in the Oregon Mission as a missionary doctor a petition against his appointment, signed by officials of the local church, in which the pastor joined, was sent to the Board. The reasons for objection were "the important services the church derives from the labors of brother White at Havana." Dr. White's labors, the petition continued, "are greatly needed and cannot be withdrawn with any degree of safety to the rising church."¹⁴⁹

Even some of the Annual Conferences were slow in responding to the appeals of the Missionary Society. In the Kentucky Conference, according to Redford, little or no interest had been awakened and twelve years passed by before the first contribution was made—\$44.50 at the Conference of 1832.¹⁵⁰

Other than publication of letters and reports in the Church periodicals, distribution of the Annual Report, and cultivation by missionary candidates and missionaries on furlough, there was little systematic promotion by the Board. As late as September, 1835, for the Corresponding Secretary to attend an Annual Conference session in the interest of the Board, special authorization was considered necessary.*

In certain sections of the country the propagation of the missionary spirit was seriously hindered by the aggressive anti-missionary attitudes of other religious groups—particularly the anti-missionary Baptists. These made persistent attempts to counteract missionary interest and effort, contending for

* *Minutes, B.M.*, Sept. 16, 1835: "Resolved, that the Corresponding Secretary be respectfully requested to visit the Oneida Conference, and the principal intermediate places for the purpose of promoting the interest of the missionary cause by holding missionary meetings and taking up collections for the benefit of our funds, and that the Board pay the travelling expenses which may be incurred by him on this mission."—III, 7.

one thing that all societies for missionary purposes were guilty of attempting to take God's work out of His hands.*

The General Conference of 1832 gave a decided impetus to the missionary cause,† recommending widely extended missionary operations.¹⁵¹ Following adjournment of the Conference a special meeting of the Board was held at which far-reaching actions were taken. With Bishops Roberts, Hedding, and Emory present the Board: (1) made an appropriation of \$2,500. to cover the estimated expense of establishing "an Indian Mission at Green Bay and other Indian Missions in the Michigan Territory"; (2) authorized a committee—following announcement by Bishop Hedding that the Bishops had determined "to form a Mission immediately in the colony at Liberia," and had selected Melville B. Cox to superintend it, and that "one or more would accompany" him—for the purpose of ascertaining the initial expense of the Liberia Mission and "all other information which may be for the interest of said Mission"; and (3) on motion requested Bishop Emory "to obtain from the proper authorities" at Washington all possible information in relation to the establishment of a mission in Mexico and in South America.¹⁵² This vigorous action challenged the Church. Everywhere new interest was manifested, not only in missionary work abroad but also at home. No less than twenty-eight new Conference missions were opened during 1832–33 and loud calls came from several other areas—unanswered for lack of men and means. "Pecuniary means," the Board of Managers hopefully reported, "will not be wanting, if suitable men can be found to engage in this work."¹⁵³

The high point of the period in scope and geographical expanse of the program was reached in 1840–41. In its *Twenty-second Annual Report* the Board was able to say that the Missionary Society had under its patronage, including the domestic and foreign work, "364 missionaries. . . ."¹⁵⁴ The amount expended during the year was \$124,879.92.

As the period closed, it may be said by way of summary, the program sponsored by the Missionary Society—domestic and foreign—comprised a wide range of distinctive types of missions. Domestic missions, in addition to Conference missions, missions to the Negroes, and missions to foreign-speaking people, included extensive missionary work among the Indians. Foreign mis-

* Cf. John Mason Peck, pioneer and long-time Baptist missionary: "A set of crude and erroneous notions had been stereotyped in their minds, in Kentucky, about gospel doctrine and moral obligation, and they were fixedly resolved to learn nothing else. . . . For several successive years we met these brethren at associations, when they took a bolder and more decided stand against all organized efforts to publish the glad tidings. . . . They maintained that Missions, Sunday-schools, Bible societies, and such-like facilities, were all men's contrivances, to take God's work out of his own hands."—R. Babcock, Ed., *op. cit.*, p. 106. Also see pp. 109ff., 183.

† "The measures adopted by the last General Conference for the purpose of enlarging the boundaries of the missionary field have had a very salutary effect upon this most important interest. . . . And if those measures are generally pursued by the bishops and annual conferences as the Discipline now directs there can be no reason to doubt that this holy cause will become more and more identified with our Church institutions, and will be supported and prosecuted with increased vigor and zeal year after year."—*Fourteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1832–33), pp. 12, 13.

sions included the Texas Mission (1834-41), the Liberia Mission, South America Missions, and the Oregon Mission. Indian missions occupied so predominant a place in the program of the Society—presenting also so many complex problems—that they require, for anything like adequate treatment, separate chapters.* The foreign missions, with exception of the Oregon Mission,† are presented in the following pages in the order named.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS

The Female Missionary Society of New York, auxiliary of the general Missionary Society, the first missionary organization and also the earliest women's missionary society in America, proved to be a plant of sturdy growth. While some auxiliaries thrived only for a brief time, the women's auxiliary had a flourishing existence of more than forty years.‡ Mary W. Mason (Mrs. Thomas Mason) was elected as its "First Directress" at the organizational meeting on July 5, 1819, and continued to hold the office throughout the lifetime of the organization. Mrs. John Vanderpool was made "Second Directress." Other officers were Mrs. Richard Seaman, treasurer, and Caroline M. Thayer, secretary. In addition there were twenty-four women managers. Several of the officers and managers were wives of officers and managers of the parent Society.

Annual anniversary meetings were held, usually largely attended. At these meetings men invariably presided and the principal addresses were delivered by ministers. In the course of forty-two years this auxiliary contributed more than twenty thousand dollars to the parent Society, besides frequent donations of clothing and books to Indian mission schools. From it also came much of the support for Ann Wilkins and her work in Liberia.

The records of the Missionary Society have few and scant references to the women's auxiliaries but there is evidence of organizations in numerous towns in the state of New York; in principal cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and in other widely separated places.

The first distinctively home missionary organization of Methodist women also was formed in New York City. In 1844 the New York Ladies Home Missionary Society was organized.§ Its first quarterly meeting was held on October 1, 1844. An early project of the Society was support of the German

* Vol. II, chs. II, III.

† Since the Oregon Mission was established as an Indian mission, and maintained as such throughout the period 1820-44, its history is included in the section (vol. II, ch. III) on Indian missions.

‡ The report for 1861 says: "Almost all our founders, with the earliest donors and subscribers, have passed away; several are yet with us, striving to do what they can. Now each church is desirous to report a large missionary collection; and every Sunday school is anxious to excel in its contributions. This accounts for our diminished receipts. Now we can only be gleaners in this work." (Forty-second Annual Report.) Shortly thereafter the Society disbanded.—"Female Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," in *Historical Sketches of Womans' Missionary Societies in England and America* (Boston: 1879), pp. 80f.

§ The year of organization is erroneously stated as 1845 by Frances J. Baker in *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, pp. 10f.

Mission of Bloomingdale, New York City. During the month of September, 1844, \$75. was contributed by the Society to the mission. Within three months more than \$400. was raised by the Society for city mission work. Ezra Withey, missionary, was appointed by Bishop Elijah Hedding "for the Ladies Home Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church."* A second German missionary, J. M. Hartman, also received support from the Society. Both missionaries were employed in field preaching.

There were also local home missionary organizations elsewhere throughout the Church. The 1828 session of the Illinois Conference acknowledged by a vote of thanks the receipt of \$6.46¼ from the Female Domestic Missionary Society of Madison.† Many of the local organizations were Dorcas Societies and of these some had "juvenile branches." An editorial in the *Christian Advocate* in 1831 stated that at the anniversary of the Dorcas Society held in John Street Church the Society reported having expended between \$400. and \$500. "during the past year in the promotion of the holy work of evangelizing the Indians."‡

THE TEXAS MISSION

Methodist Circuit Riders were the first preachers of the evangelical gospel in Texas, penetrating the area even before 1821—when Mexico completed its long struggle for independence, thereby incorporating Texas within its territory.

Extensive immigration from the United States, mostly from the southern states of the Union, began about 1821, and was continuous throughout the period of the Mexican regime. Between 1821 and 1830, the American population increased from 4,000 to almost 20,000. Dissatisfied with Mexican rule, in 1835 the settlers organized a provisional government. A short but bitter war was decisively ended on April 21, 1836, when Sam Houston's command defeated the forces of Santa Anna. A republican constitution having been adopted, Houston was elected president in 1836, and in 1837 the independence of the Republic of Texas was recognized by the United States, Great Britain, France, and Belgium. The Republic was annexed to the Union in 1845 and

* Ezra Withey engaged in outdoor preaching, beginning in July, 1844. The public notice read: "The Rev. Ezra Withey, the New York Ladies Home Missionary, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, will, Providence permitting, preach in the open air on Sunday, July 21st, at eight o'clock, A.M., and at five o'clock P.M. on the triangular inclosed lots corner of Greenwich Lane and Seventh Avenue. . . . The public generally are invited to attend."—*Christian Advocate and Journal*, XVIII (1844), 49 (July 17), 194.

† Evidence of the importance attached to small cash contributions is furnished by the action of the Conference in appointing a committee of four of its members to distribute the amount "to the most needy. . . ."—*Journal of the Illinois Conference*, Oct. 11, 1828, in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1784-1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, p. 316.

‡ Of this amount \$60. were contributed "by the juvenile branch of the Dorcas Society. . . ." (*Christian Advocate*, V [1831], 31 [Apr. 1], 122.) A Society was reported formed "by the native females" of the Mohawk Mission in Canada. (*Ibid.*) Cyrus Shepard urged the women of New England to form Dorcas Societies in the churches for the purpose of making clothing for the destitute Indian children of the missions in Oregon.—*Christian Advocate and Journal*, X (1835), 12 (Nov. 13), 46.

under a joint resolution of Congress adopted on March 1, 1845, Texas was admitted into the Union as a state.¹⁵⁵

During the Mexican regime, as under the earlier Spanish rule, Protestant worship was prohibited in Texas. But the northeastern section of the province lying between the Red River and Sulphur River fork was generally considered a part of Arkansas Territory and settlements were established there in early days by immigrants under the assumption that they were settling inside the United States' border. Some among them were doubtless Methodists.

Accounts of the beginnings of Methodist preaching in the region are fragmentary and it is difficult to determine the historical facts with certainty. The first Methodist minister known to have preached in the region was William Stevenson.* When on a preaching tour in Arkansas in 1815 Stevenson crossed the Red River and formed a Society—the first Methodist Society in Texas—in a settlement of Americans at Pecan Point.¹⁵⁶ The next year (1816) Stevenson was appointed to the Hot Springs Circuit of the Missouri Conference.¹⁵⁷ Probably in this same year he established his home in Hempstead County, southwestern Arkansas. His Circuit embraced all of the Arkansas territory lying south of the Arkansas River.¹⁵⁸ In 1817 he was reappointed, and the next year (1818) was made Presiding Elder of the Black River (Arkansas) District of the Missouri Conference, serving also as senior preacher on the Mount Prairie and Pecan Point Circuit.¹⁵⁹ For ten years he was continued on Districts and Circuits in this same general region. From what is known of his character and activities it seems likely that he preached not merely once, but many times in Texas.

There is some testimony to the effect that another Methodist Class was formed on Texas soil, "at Jonesboro," in 1817, but the exact location of Jonesboro, how long the Society existed, or who composed it "there are no known records in existence to show."¹⁶⁰

A second Methodist who preached in Texas within the period of Spanish rule was Henry Stephenson. He dictated a statement, shortly before his death, "to Dr. Lawhon," in which he stated that he attempted to preach in June, 1824, at the house of a Mr. Stafford, "near where San Augustine now stands" but desisted under threat of the Alcalde that "he would enforce the

* William Stevenson (1768-1857) was born of Presbyterian parents in a frontier settlement of South Carolina. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in October, 1815, and appointed to Bellevue Circuit, Missouri District. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 269, 283.) As early as 1806 he was a Local Preacher, during the Conference year 1805-6 assisting Benjamin Edge on the Roaring River Circuit in Tennessee. In the interim he made two preaching tours in Arkansas, the first in 1813. In his autobiography he states that on his return to his home from the second tour, covering six months, he learned that in his absence he had been admitted into the traveling ministry. Thus the approximate date of his first preaching in Texas is established as the summer or fall of 1815. Stevenson was "not only the first preacher to enter Texas but [also] . . . the first regular itinerant to enter and preach in Arkansas. . . . the pathfinder for all the southwestern frontier of Methodism." (Macum Phelan, *History of Early Methodism in Texas, 1817-1866*, p. 15.) He continued on the Black River District (in 1820 renamed the Arkansas District) until 1821. For one year he was located, but in 1825 he was appointed to Natchitoches, Louisiana—a new Circuit. In 1826 he transferred to the Mississippi Conference. When a Louisiana Conference was organized in 1846, his membership was transferred to it. He was thus a pioneer of three Conferences—Missouri, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

prohibition law on any Protestant preacher who would attempt to preach in his municipality." He then went to the house of Thomas Spencer, on the Aloyaque River, twelve miles further west where he preached his first sermon in the province of Texas. He preached at this time also in four other settlements.¹⁶¹

James T. P. Irvine, who later became a Methodist Preacher, settled in Texas in 1830. In a letter published in *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1855 he stated that in 1831-32 Needham J. Alford, a Local Preacher from Louisiana, preached occasionally in his neighborhood.¹⁶²

In 1831, James P. Stevenson, a son of William Stevenson, was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference and in 1832 was appointed to the Sabine Circuit.¹⁶³ He visited eastern Texas several times in 1833*—in association with Enoch N. Talley, holding a Camp Meeting at which Col. S. O. McMahan was converted. In that year he is believed to have organized "a religious society" of forty-eight members, although—influenced by the law which proscribed Protestant churches—"the organization did not take the name of church and . . . none of the ordinances or formalities of the Church were observed."¹⁶⁴

In July, 1834, Henry Stephenson again crossed over from Louisiana into Texas, preaching and holding a Camp Meeting in which there were several conversions. Irvine states that he succeeded in forming two Societies, one of which was located about twelve miles east of San Augustine and was later housed in McMahan (or McMahan) Chapel. It has continued to this day—"the oldest [Methodist] Church having a continuous existence in Texas."¹⁶⁵ A contemporary, John G. Jones, records that Henry Stephenson—although advanced in years—was "more than willing" to take charge of a mission in Texas.¹⁶⁶ Having been admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference in 1833, the next year—at the November, 1834, session of the Conference—he was appointed to the "Texas Mission," the first official appointment to Texas.¹⁶⁷ He removed to Texas in the fall of 1835 but "pressed with increasing age and infirmities" found it necessary to discontinue his Conference relationship, though, as he was able, he continued to preach.¹⁶⁸

While the General Conference of 1836 was in session in Cincinnati word was received of the decisive battle of San Jacinto: Texas was free. The news caused much excitement and no little rejoicing. Dr. Martin Ruter, President of Allegheny College, one of the most prominent and highly esteemed members of the Conference, immediately offered himself as a missionary to the new Republic "to go whenever it should be deemed a proper time for entering that field of labor."¹⁶⁹ The Bishops agreed that an enlarged missionary

* The *General Minutes* record that J. P. Stevenson was appointed in 1833 to the Monroe Circuit, Lake Providence District; in 1834 to the Natchitoches Circuit; and in 1835 was located, and removed into East Texas.—*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 239, 304, 399.

program might be advisable within a few months. At a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society on March 22, 1837, a communication was reported from Bishop Morris recommending the establishment by the Board of a mission in Texas, and the following resolution was adopted:

that as in the opinion of the Board, the present state of things in Texas justifies an effort to establish a mission there, it be and hereby is recommended to Bishop Hedding to select and appoint at least two additional missionaries for that country without delay, or as soon as it may be convenient.¹⁷⁰

On April 19 the Corresponding Secretary reported a letter from Bishop Hedding announcing the appointment of Martin Ruter as Superintendent of the Texas Mission, and to assist him, Littleton Fowler and Robert Alexander.¹⁷¹ It would have been difficult to find in the entire Church three men better qualified for the task. Dr. Ruter was a man of mature years, of broad experience, keen intellect, vigorous physique, and deep devotion.* Littleton Fowler† was a man of conspicuous ability—with ten years' experience in the itinerancy in Kentucky and Tennessee. He is characterized by Redford as "one of the sweetest spirits that ever belonged to the Methodist ministry in the West."¹⁷² He was appointed to the Texas Mission in 1837 from the Tennessee Conference.¹⁷³

Robert Alexander‡ was the youngest of the three missionaries, only twenty-six years of age but by no means inexperienced. He had been a Circuit Rider for six years, having been admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in 1830. After preaching in that Conference for four years, he transferred first to the Alabama, then to the Mississippi Conference, and in 1835 was appointed Presiding Elder of the Chickasaw District. He was pastor at Natchez Station when in 1836 he volunteered to go as a missionary to Texas.¹⁷⁴ On

* Martin Ruter (1785–1838) was born in Charlton, Worcester County, Mass. At fifteen years of age he was licensed to preach and at sixteen was admitted on trial in the New York Conference and appointed junior preacher on the Chesterfield Circuit, New London District. (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 95, 101.) In 1804 he volunteered as a missionary to Lower Canada and was appointed to Montreal, remaining in Canada for only one year. Appointed to Boston in 1808, he was the same year elected a delegate to the first delegated General Conference. At twenty-four (1809) he was appointed Presiding Elder of the New Hampshire District of the New England Conference. Although he had no more than a common school education, he was made head of the New Market (Mass.) Wesleyan Academy where he remained two years (1818–20). The General Conference of 1820 established a western branch of the Book Concern at Cincinnati and he was elected Book Agent; re-elected in 1824. Transylvania University (Ky.), without his knowledge, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1822. In 1828 he was elected President of Augusta College, Kentucky, and in 1834 President of Allegheny College. He died at Washington, Texas, on May 16, 1838. An obituary is to be found in the *General Minutes* (II, 579f.). See also Matthew Simpson, Ed., *Cyclopaedia of Methodism*, p. 770; Thomas O. Summers, Ed., *Biographical Sketches of Eminent Itinerant Ministers*, pp. 321ff.

† Littleton Fowler (1802–46), a native of Tennessee, was received on trial in the Kentucky Conference in 1826 and appointed as junior preacher on the Red River Circuit (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 514, 515). He transferred to the Tennessee Conference in 1832 and from 1833 until his appointment as missionary to Texas served as agent of La Grange College, La Grange, Ala. Following the death of Martin Ruter in 1838 he was made Superintendent of the Texas Mission. He continued to serve in Texas until his death, his last appointment being to the Sabine District, East Texas Conference, 1845.

‡ Robert Alexander (1811–82), also a native of Tennessee, was descended from a family of Scotch Covenanters—a family much given to preaching, pedagogy, and sturdy patriotism—himself "a giant in body as well as in mind." His entire ministry from 1837 on was given to Texas Methodism. Of him it was said, following his death, that no man had done more "for the cause of Christ and public virtue in Texas."—Homer S. Thrall, *Methodism in Texas*, pp. 248ff.

August 19, 1837, he crossed the Sabine River—the first of the three to arrive on the new field—and preached at the house of a Mr. Walker. Within a few weeks he had held two Camp Meetings. At the close of the second meeting a Missionary Society was organized and subscriptions taken for the support of the mission “amounting to an annual pledge of about \$1000.”¹⁷⁵

Littleton Fowler arrived in Texas in October. An extract from his *Journal* reads:

On my departure from Arkansas I employed Rev. John B. Denton, a local preacher, to labor in the Texas mission. . . . Reached Nacogdoches Oct. 16, preached two sermons, one by J. B. Denton, one by the missionary. On 19th . . . we got to San Augustine, where I preached four nights in succession and held a two days' meeting. At the close of the meeting I began a subscription for lumber to build a church. . . . In less than two weeks . . . a lot was deeded to us 160 feet square, central in town, with three thousand five hundred and twenty-five dollars subscribed. Trustees were appointed and the house under written contract to be finished by the first of September next (1838).¹⁷⁶

From Nacogdoches, Fowler went on to Washington where he preached in a schoolhouse and secured two lots for a church; then to Houston, arriving on Sunday morning, November 19, and preached in the afternoon to a crowded house. Ten months old, Houston had 800 inhabitants, a State House, many stores, and “a vast number of doggeries” (saloons). On November 21 he was elected Chaplain of the State Senate, and on November 26 preached morning and night to large congregations in the Capitol. In Houston, also, he obtained a deed for a lot for a church building. He was enthused by the opportunity that opened before him:

Texas is now, perhaps, the most inviting and interesting missionary field that has existed since the days of the apostles. The soil, government, language, and climate, will invite thousands annually to emigrate to our new and interesting republic. . . . The people are hospitable and intelligent, and generally receive the ministers with pleasure and delight. The public mind is decidedly in favor of Christianity, believing that its influence is favorable to morality, the good of the people, and the stability of the republic. . . . Brethren and fathers! not only pray for us, but send us ministers without delay—they are much needed.¹⁷⁷

Late in November (1837) Martin Ruter joined his two associates in Texas and with accustomed energy and enthusiasm entered upon his self-imposed task. David Ayers, a layman, who accompanied Ruter on some of his horseback journeys over the raw wilderness of Texas through the storms and mud of midwinter has left a record of his impressions. He says that while he considered himself a hard rider he found it not easy to maintain the pace set by his companion. Thrall writes that Ruter rode a large black horse, invariably in a sweeping trot, and that once when advised to await better weather, replied simply: “The Master's business requireth haste.” His purpose and plan of campaign were clearly and definitely formulated:

My labors in Texas will be directed to forming societies and circuits, establishing schools, and making arrangements for a college or university. Some of the people here are very rich, some are very poor, some religious and some profligate. But preachers are needed, and preaching beyond measure. I feel certain our mission will have entire success. We have now twelve societies. . . . I trust by the grace of God to lay the foundation for a glorious superstructure, and that the Church of Christ will be here established in its purity, power and glory.¹⁷⁸

During the winter his plans quickly took shape and early in April (1838) he started to the East to attend the annual meeting of the Missionary Society and to present an appeal for twelve new recruits. On April 7 he suffered an attack of fever but rode on, filling one preaching engagement after another until Sunday, the twenty-second, when he became too ill to proceed further, and being without medical aid or advice, turned back, riding forty-five miles to Washington, Texas, where two physicians were called to attend him. He wrote letters to his family telling of his illness and expressing hope of recovery. He prepared a complete report of the work of the mission, forwarding it to Nathan Bangs, Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society. On May 16, at two o'clock in the morning, he was overtaken by death and at five o'clock that night his body was interred in the soil of Texas, at Washington. Less than six months had been given him in which to serve in the mission field to which he envisioned devoting years of zealous labor but in that brief time he had succeeded in laying enduring foundations.¹⁷⁹ To this day the name of Martin Ruter is honored and revered by Texas Methodism.

In June, 1838, Littleton Fowler was commissioned Superintendent of the mission.¹⁸⁰ At the session of the Mississippi Conference held in December, 1838, the Texas Mission District was formed, with Fowler as Presiding Elder, five Circuits and seven preachers—Robert Alexander and J. P. Sneed from the Mississippi Conference; I. L. G. Strickland,* S. A. Williams, and Jesse Hoard, missionaries from the Tennessee Conference; and Abel Stevens from the New England Conference.¹⁸¹ The following year (1839) the Districts were increased to two—the San Augustine District, Littleton Fowler, Presiding Elder, with seven appointments—six Circuits and one Station, Houston—and seven preachers; and Rutersville District, Robert Alexander, Presiding Elder, eight Circuits and Stations and eight preachers.¹⁸² The General Conference of 1840 established the Texas Conference to "include the Republic of Texas, except what is embraced in the Red River District of the Arkansas Conference."¹⁸³

The first session of the new Conference opened on Christmas Day, December 25, 1840, at Rutersville. Bishop Beverly Waugh, who presided, supplied the following account:

* I. L. G. Strickland died within one year. Abel Stevens, after six months, was compelled by ill health to leave the field.—*Twenty-first Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1839-40), p. 17.

This was the first time a conference of Methodist preachers ever assembled in Texas. Our number was, indeed, small, consisting of nine members. There were six probationers, five only of whom were continued. . . . Our conference continued in session four days, in much love and harmony. . . . We received on trial four preachers, and readmitted one into the travelling connection. The number of members reported from the several circuits was eighteen hundred and fifty-three, and twenty-five local preachers.¹⁸⁴

The *Minutes* of the session report three Districts, sixteen Circuits and Stations, and nineteen Traveling Preachers (including Presiding Elders), as receiving appointments. The college of which Martin Ruter dreamed had become a reality, chartered by the government of the Republic—the government also having made a grant of 8,883 acres of land for endowment.¹⁸⁵ It was located at Rutersville and bore the name of Rutersville College.*

With an Annual Conference of its own, Texas Methodism made rapid progress. The second session (1841) reported a net gain of 917 church members. An urgent demand existing for more preachers, in 1842 Littleton Fowler visited some of the northern Conferences in quest of volunteers. At the Ohio Conference his appeal met an enthusiastic response—John W. De Vilbiss, William O'Conner, Daniel Poe, Homer S. Thrall, Wilbur J. Thurbur, and Richard Walker volunteered as missionaries† and were duly appointed to Texas. From the North Ohio Conference Isaac M. Williams volunteered. Late in 1841 the veteran pioneer missionary, John Clark, at that time a member of the Rock River Conference, offered himself for Texas and was appointed Presiding Elder of the Rutersville District.¹⁸⁶ Setting out from Dixon, Illinois, accompanied by Mrs. Clark, and Josiah W. Whipple who also had volunteered for service in Texas, he journeyed thirteen hundred miles in "a covered carriage" drawn by "a good pair of horses," and on January 19, 1842, arrived at Rutersville.¹⁸⁷ He rented a small, unfurnished room for eight dollars per month and, leaving housekeeping arrangements to his wife, started on the round of the Circuits. The District covered an extensive territory, including nearly all the settlements on the Brazos, Colorado, and Guadaloupe Rivers. At Austin he found Congress in session and preached in the Senate Chamber to a large congregation. The frontier was in constant peril from hostile Indians. The Republic was at war with Mexico and the warfare had increased Indian hostility. Mr. Clark was advised to carry weapons for self-protection and armed himself with a large pistol and a shotgun. His biographer says that he "soon learned to carry his implements of

* Rutersville College failed to prosper, and after a few years ceased to be in any sense a Church school. In 1856 the Legislature withdrew from the Texas Conference the right of appointing the trustees and the institution became the "Texas Monumental and Military Institute."—M. Phelan, *op. cit.*, pp. 331ff.; 400ff.

† Among those who arose at the Ohio Conference and started to take his seat among the volunteers, it is reported, "was Randolph S. Foster, afterwards Bishop Foster, when a member of the Conference sitting near him caught him by the coattail and pulled him back, saying, 'Randolph, you have no business in Texas.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 210.

war with as much ease and grace as he carried his saddle-bags," showing himself "peculiarly fitted by both nature and grace for the work before him."¹⁸⁸

As evidence of progress of the mission the *Annual Report of the Missionary Society* for 1843-44 reported the number of Traveling Preachers in Texas as 40; church members, 5,025; and new church buildings erected in Galveston, St. Augustine, and Houston. So vast was the field and so numerous were the opportunities for service that the General Conference of 1844 authorized two Conferences, to be known as the Eastern Texas and the Western Texas Annual Conferences.¹⁸⁹

OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Fourteen years—lacking one month—passed, following the organization of the Missionary Society, before the first Methodist missionary to an overseas field arrived at his appointed destination. On Friday, March 8, 1833, Melville B. Cox wrote in his "Diary":

Thank God, I am now at Liberia. . . . This morning about eight I came on shore. The governor received me kindly, and I am now at Rev. Brother Pinney's* room, where I am to tarry till farther provisions are made for me.¹⁹⁰

For the Society, as for many missionary-minded members of the Church at large, this marked the realization of hope long deferred. While the promotion of domestic missions was the primary object in the organization of the Missionary Society, from the beginning many of the leaders of the Church had in mind far-away fields where the Gospel had never been declared as a goal of their hopes and faith. As early as December, 1824, McKendree had written to his colleagues, Roberts and Soule:

the attention of the last General Conference was invited to the establishment of a mission at Liberia, with an eye of thus opening the way for the gospel among the native Africans. . . . the General Conference approved the design, and authorized the Bishops to send out a missionary or missionaries immediately; but as yet nothing has been done. Can it be that a suitable man cannot be found among all our ministers? or, is the failure attributable to us? Dear brethren, let us strive to effect this grand object.¹⁹¹

FOUNDING OF THE LIBERIA MISSION

The beginnings of the Liberia Mission were closely tied in with the organization, and development during its formative years, of the American Colonization Society. Organized in 1816 in Washington, D.C., by a group concerned for the welfare of American Negroes, the Society at once enlisted the interest and cooperation of the Churches. The motives actuating the founders were various—a fact that throws light on some of the difficulties later en-

* J. P. Pinney was a Presbyterian minister.

countered by the Society. Organization was aided by the upsurge of missionary spirit in all the Churches that characterized the early years of the nineteenth century. Bushrod Washington, nephew of George Washington, a judge of the Supreme Court, and the first President of the Society, believed that it might be made a principal agency "for the conversion of the Africans to Christianity" by raising up a supply of native teachers.¹⁹² Others also held similar views, believing that Christian Negroes from the United States could serve as the nucleus of a civilized Christian state whose influence might ultimately permeate the entire continent. Many supporters were chiefly interested in the colony* as an asylum for Negro freedmen who were finding it almost impossible to achieve security and economic opportunity. Some slaveholders who sincerely deplored the institution of slavery, and yet held that free Negroes were a menace to white society, were willing to manumit their slaves if a haven of refuge could be provided for them outside of the United States. Some outright Abolitionists believed that provision of a Negro colony in Africa could be made an effective means of aiding the cause of abolition,¹⁹³ others, however, felt that the removal of free Negroes might serve to "rivet the chains of slavery yet tighter."

The first choice of a site was extremely unfortunate—an island at the mouth of the Sherbro River, adjoining the Grain Coast in the province of Guiana, latitude seven degrees north. It was flat, barely above sea level, subject to extensive inundation, intensely hot, with almost continuous rain from March until June, and again during October. "African fever" took terrific toll among the early contingent of emigrants, making it evident that a different location must be found. In 1821 a much more extensive tract of land—now composing the area of the Republic of Liberia—was purchased from the native chiefs, on the Grain Coast latitude six degrees north, including the cape of Mesurado. While this region was also subject to malaria, it was much less deadly than the earlier site. Since many of the colonists were able to maintain themselves in reasonably good health and in comparative comfort, and send back favorable reports, emigration from the United States steadily increased. A capital site was selected and a town—Monrovia—was built. Prospects for the future of the Society brightened.

Of churchmen prominent in the founding of the Society the leading spirit was Robert Finley, Presbyterian minister, of Basking Ridge, New Jersey. Another was William Meade, later Episcopal Bishop of Virginia, and the first agent of the Society. A third was Samuel J. Mills, identified with the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

* Throughout the entire period 1820–44 Liberia had the status of an American colony of freed Negroes. The name Liberia was proposed in 1824 by the Rev. R. R. Gurley, at that time General Agent of the Colonization Society. Not until 1847 was the country declared by the colonists to be an independent republic.

who was one of a group who went to the West Coast of Africa in search of a location for the colony and died on the homeward voyage.*

A number of Methodist Annual Conferences gave formal endorsement to the Society, some appointing members as agents for the solicitation of funds for its support. In 1831 the Kentucky Conference authorized the appointment of George C. Light, one of its most prominent members, as agent for Kentucky. After he had served the Society for two years, at the Conference of 1833 W. P. Macknight was appointed as agent, and at the 1834 Conference, Richard Corwine. The *Minutes* of the Ohio Conference for 1831 carry the notation that the Conference "has permitted Samuel A. Latta to act as agent for the American Colonization Society for one year," and the 1832 *Minutes* that "E. W. Sehon has leave, for the ensuing year, to serve as agent for the American Colonization Society." The Holston Conference at its 1832 session took the unusual action of ordering "every presiding elder and preacher in charge . . . to take up a collection" on or near the fourth of July, 1883, for the Society.¹⁹⁴ In addition to taking collections for the work of the Society, in at least some cases agents were expected to form local Colonization Societies. In 1829 Henry B. Bascom,† then a member of the Pittsburgh Conference, acted as an agent of the Society and traveled extensively, taking collections and endeavoring to organize local branches. His *Diary* supplies some indication of degrees of interest in the objectives and program of the Society in various parts of the country.¹⁹⁵ At different times prominent Methodist leaders served as Vice Presidents of the Society—among others, Bishop James O. Andrew, Bishop Thomas Morris, Bishop Beverly Waugh, Willbur Fisk, Thomas E. Bond, editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, William Winans, and John P. Durbin.

The first contingent of colonists, consisting of some eighty free Negroes, sailed from New York on February 6, 1820, on the *Elizabeth*, a Navy store ship—a government vessel. With the aid of a ship of lighter draft, passengers and stores were landed at Campelar, on the east side of Sherbro Island, on March 20. By the first of June, the three agents in charge of the expedition and twenty-two of the colonists had died.

In the course of the voyage one of the emigrants—Daniel Coker,‡ a minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church—organized on shipboard a Methodist Society in accordance with the Discipline of his Church. In the

* Concerning his mission to Liberia Samuel J. Mills had written: ". . . We go to make freemen of slaves . . . if the plan proposed succeeds, it will ultimately be the means of exterminating slavery in our country. . . . Ethiopia will soon stretch out her hands unto God." Mills' death occurred on June 16, 1818. "As the sun went down . . . the body was committed to the ocean."—Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, p. 77.

† On the life and ministry of H. B. Bascom, see II, ch. VI.

‡ Daniel Coker (circa 1785–1846) was born a slave. He succeeded in purchasing his freedom and obtained a liberal education. He was connected with the African Methodist Episcopal Church from its organization in 1816. His *Journal* is a well-written, interesting account of the voyage of the *Elizabeth* and of the history of the colony at Sherbro.

calamities that befell the first settlement Coker not only served as pastor but also as physician, nurse, and counselor. Following the death of the three agents, responsibility for the general welfare, and for the care of the property of the Colonization Society and of the government devolved upon him. In the discharge of these heavy responsibilities he demonstrated not only a high sense of honor and integrity but also much ability as an administrator. The remnant of the first colony, sadly decimated by death and disease, finally took refuge in Sierra Leone. Here the little Methodist Church lived on, shepherded for many years by the faithful pastor.¹⁹⁶

The proponents of the Colonization Society were disheartened by reports of the disasters that had attended the first expedition but they did not despair. In August, 1822, a contingent of immigrants arrived at Montserado. Other groups followed at intervals—eighteen expeditions in all during the decade 1820–30, with 1,420 emigrants.¹⁹⁷ Among them were many Methodists, members of the Methodist Episcopal and the African Methodist Episcopal Churches. Appeals came from them for ordained ministers, that members of the Church might not be deprived of the sacraments, and for missionaries that the native population might be given the Gospel. The matter was brought formally to the attention of the General Conference of 1824 by request of the Colonization Society for endorsement, but the Conference was unwilling to do more than approve a resolution of its Committee:

That it is expedient, whenever the funds of the Missionary Society will justify the measure, for the episcopacy to select and send a missionary or missionaries to the colony in Africa, now establishing under the auspices of the American Colonization Society.¹⁹⁸

Eight months later, in January, 1825, the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society instructed the Corresponding Secretary to notify the Bishops that "the state of the funds" was such "as to justify the sending of a missionary" to the colony and to "request that a suitable person" be selected and sent. No appointment being made by the Bishops, substantially the same action was taken in May, 1830, and again in March, 1831.¹⁹⁹ In the meantime, the Baptists, in 1826, had sent to Liberia the first white missionary, the Rev. Calvin Holton. Within a few months he died, a victim of the dreaded "African fever."²⁰⁰

The Bishops were not unmindful of the need. At their request a special meeting of the Board of Managers was called for April 30, 1831, when Bishop Hedding stated at length the reasons which had prevented the appointment, chief of which was the great difficulty of finding a suitable man. Several had been considered but none was available. Bishop Soule confirmed Hedding's statement. He also said that consideration had been given to sending a Negro missionary but this did not seem practicable. Of the emi-

grants, several Local Preachers, the Bishop said, had been ordained,* so that the need was not as urgent as it otherwise would have been.²⁰¹

Meanwhile members of the colony had opened correspondence with the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York of which Gabriel P. Disosway was Corresponding Secretary. Mr. Disosway previously had assisted the colony in various ways—among others, aiding J. R. Roberts (later the first president of the Republic of Liberia) in his outgoing. That his active interest was not ineffective is indicated in the introductory paragraph of a report and appeal for contributions printed in August, 1833, in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*:

The Young Men's Missionary Society of New-York . . . having for several years directed their sole efforts toward introducing the Gospel into Africa, and having happily succeeded in obtaining the appointment of the Rev. Melville B. Cox, as the superintendent of that mission, respectfully and affectionately present to the public the accompanying Missionary Report. . . .

The report was signed by David M. Reese, M.D., President, Gabriel P. Disosway, Corresponding Secretary, and Louis King, Treasurer.²⁰² The report stated that the Society had pledged "the entire support of Brother Cox, and . . . the mission," and had "already paid the expenses of his embarkation, passage, and a part of his salary. . . ." Cox had sailed from Norfolk on the ship *Jupiter* on November 6, 1832.

Melville Beveridge Cox, Methodism's first missionary to Africa,† at the time of his embarkation for Liberia was thirty-three years of age.‡ For four years he had been an itinerant in Maine. In 1825 he contracted tuberculosis, from then on fighting an heroic but steadily losing battle. For one year, during which "he was generally unable to speak aloud," he managed a bookstore in Hallowell. Later, for the greater part of a year he traveled about, searching "for some means of usefulness, and hoping at the same time to meet with a congenial climate." Following his marriage, he lived for several months with his wife's family, "engrossed with the pleasing cares" of the estate "Clover Hill." He then became editor of a weekly religious journal, the *Itinerant*, meanwhile pondering the notion of undertaking the writing of a "History of American Methodism." In February, 1831, so frail and his lungs so irritable that even the slightest exertion of his voice caused severe

* From what appears later (see p. 331.) the ordination evidently was only to local deacon's orders, which did not confer the right of administering the sacraments.

† Referring to Melville B. Cox, Abel Stevens says he was "the first foreign missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (*op. cit.*, IV, 43). But in this statement he contradicts himself since elsewhere, referring to Freehorn Garrettson and James O. Cromwell, he says they ". . . were the first foreign missionaries ever commissioned by the Protestantism of the New World."—*Supplementary History of American Methodism*, p. 174.

‡ Melville B. Cox (1799–1833), was born at Hallowell, Me., and lived during his early life on a farm. He was received on trial in the New England Conference in 1822 and appointed to the Exeter Circuit (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 375, 392). In 1831 he was received by transfer into the Virginia Conference and appointed to Raleigh (*ibid.*, II, 95). On Feb. 7, 1828, he married Ellen Cromwell of Baltimore, Md., who died in December, 1830.

pain, he resolved—live or die—“to go and offer myself, all broken down as I am, to the Virginia Conference,” and to ask for *an effective relation*. Unbelievable as it seems, his request was granted and he entered upon a pastorate in the city of Raleigh, but not for long. Every attempt to preach brought on extreme suffering and exhaustion and after a few months he was compelled by physicians’ orders to resign his charge. But his will to serve somewhere, somehow, was indomitable and in December, 1831, we find him writing:

I have now four anchors out, and I hope that some of them will hold on. In view of my inability to preach, my mind has been constantly inventing something by which I might support myself without being burdensome to others. I have an eye to the editorship of a paper in Georgia, and another to be published in Richmond . . . and I have made some inquiries about an agency for the Colonization Society; also a mission to South America.

Six months later the eyes of the dying man were turned toward Liberia. He met Bishop Hedding and suggested to him the possibility of the South America Mission, “and he, in return proposed one for me to Liberia.” And he adds, “if the Lord will, I think I shall go.” On May 5, 1832, in Philadelphia, where the General Conference was in session, he called on Bishop McKendree, and records, “He does not hesitate to say that *he* is prepared to send me to Liberia.” The decision was made:

May 7.—The Episcopacy has concluded to send me to Liberia. . . . I thirst to be on my way. I pray that God may fit my soul and body for the duties before me; that God may go with me; then I have no lingering fear. A grave in Africa shall be *sweet* to me, if he sustain me.

To most of his friends the enterprise seemed—how could it be otherwise?—the height of folly. One advised him to take his coffin with him; another declared that it was “offering murder for sacrifice”; yet another that it was “flying directly in the face of . . . Providence.” As for himself, although at times he cherished the hope that God would return him in safety to his native land, his prevailing thought was of death. At Wesleyan University, he said to a young friend: “If I die in Africa, you must come and write my epitaph.” “I will,” his friend replied, “but what shall I write?” “Write,” he replied, “Let a thousand fall before Africa be given up.”²⁰³

When Cox arrived in Liberia there had already been burned into his soul the injunction: “What thou doest, do quickly.” Four days after his arrival he inscribed in his *Journal* a plan for the mission, so comprehensive and far-sighted that it supplied an outline basis for much that was done during ensuing decades:

1. To establish a mission at Grand Bassa, to connect with it a school, and to give the care of both into the hands of a local preacher who has just arrived from Virginia.
2. To establish the ‘New-York Mission’ at Sego, on the Niger. . . .

3. I want to establish a school here [Monrovia] which will connect with it agriculture and art. I propose the Maine Wesleyan Seminary as a model, as near as may be. There should be a large farm. This, in a few years, would support the whole school. There must also be shoemakers, tanners, blacksmiths, carpenters, &c. The native children must be taken and boarded, kept entirely clear from their parents or associates, and bound to the school until they are eighteen or twenty-one.

4. I have another mission on my mind, either for the interior or at Cape Mount. I am not yet satisfied which is the better place. I have purchased a mission house at Monrovia, for which I shall draw on the Society for five hundred dollars. It has connected with it considerable land, left by the devoted Ashmun for missionary purposes. I consider the purchase as particularly providential, and worth, at least, to the mission, a thousand dollars.

In a letter to the Board, written later, Cox enlarged upon these several proposals. At Grand Bassa, about seventy miles east of Monrovia, emigrants, with children, had settled and were in need of oversight and education. The natives at and near Cape Mount, he represented, were "far more intelligent than at any place under the protection of the colony." Sego, on the Niger, he said, was in "the very heart of Africa" and to no place did he look "for happier results." The proposed school near Monrovia would unite "under one roof religion, art, science, and industry."

But the zealous missionary's time was not spent in dreaming of what he hoped might be done in the future. He set himself to the accomplishment of tasks immediately at hand. He examined carefully into the religious state of the colony. He assembled conferences for transaction of business needing attention. He arranged for the holding of a Camp Meeting—the first, probably, ever held on the continent—which opened on March 29. He organized a Sunday school, the first session held on April 6, with an attendance of seventy children.

Contention had arisen, growing out of a claim by some of the preachers among the colonists, that they had received an ordination which gave them a right to administer the sacraments. Cox was persuaded that their procedure was irregular. A series of conferences was held with them resulting, on April 9, in their signing formal articles of agreement providing:

That we will adopt the 'Articles of Religion,' the 'General Rules,' and the moral discipline in general of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America; and that we will follow its 'spiritual' and 'temporal economy,' both to the letter and the spirit, as far as our changed circumstances will possibly allow . . . hereafter none of us will administer the sacraments unless we have been, or until we shall have been properly authorized so to do by the regular Episcopacy of the parent Church in America.²⁰⁴

By the action of these conferences the Methodist Episcopal Church was regularly organized in Liberia. By the agreement signed, the Local Preach-

ers bound themselves "as soon and as fast as the wants of [their] families" would justify it to "leave the service of tables" and to give themselves wholly to the work of the ministry.

The conditions under which the invalid missionary was living are graphically described in a letter written on April 5 to his mother:

I have bought a table, a candlestick, a few cups and saucers, a pound of tea, a *kroo* of rice, a few mackerel, borrowed *one tea-spoon*, a cot to sleep on, and am living on rice morning, noon, and night. But I assure you it eats sweetly. We have beef, mutton, goat, and some pork here, but they are so exorbitantly high I don't choose to indulge myself with them.²⁰⁵

On April 12—one month and four days after his arrival in Liberia—Cox felt the first symptoms of the "African fever." It immediately struck through his whole system. On the twenty-seventh he felt strong enough to walk a few steps. The periodical rains had set in. Soon the attack was renewed. Regular nursing care could not be had "for love or money." The governor, who had shown him much kindness, himself was confined to his bed. The doctor also was ill and could make calls only irregularly. He grew more and more weak. He wrote in his *Journal*:

Sunday [June] 23.—My poor body is emaciated to a degree never before known. . . . mere skin and bones; and every day tells me the chances are against me. . . . Wednesday 26.—It is now four days since I have seen a physician. . . . My fever was dreadfully high last night. This morning I feel as feeble as mortality can well. To God I commit all.²⁰⁶

He made arrangements for his funeral. He had fought a good fight; he had kept the faith, and on the twenty-first of July the spirit of this noble man of God left its tenement of clay.

At this distance the action of the Bishops—McKendree, Hedding, and Soule—in sending a man on whom death had already placed his mark to what was generally believed to be one of the most deadly climates of the earth seems inscrutable. What possibly could have been their course of reasoning? For his own part in the tragedy much can be said. His holding aloft of the missionary standard, his utter fearlessness, his giving of himself to the last ounce of his strength, have been an inspiration to thousands who have come after him.

Cox was dead but Africa was not to be given up. At a meeting of the Board of Managers on September 25, 1833, the Corresponding Secretary read a letter from Liberia announcing the death of Cox "of the African fever." At the same meeting announcement was made that the Rev. Rufus Spaulding and the Rev. Samuel Osgood Wright, with their wives and Miss Sophronia Farrington (whose services as teacher had been engaged "by the Missionary Society of Boston") would soon sail from Norfolk, Virginia, for Liberia. At

the same time the Board approved the outgoing of Francis Burns, a Negro and Local Preacher, as a teacher, "provided he be found competent."²⁰⁷

Rufus Spaulding* and Samuel O. Wright† had been appointed "missionaries to Africa" at the 1833 session of the New England Conference, held in Boston beginning June 5. As the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York had been instrumental in the appointment of Melville B. Cox, so the impulse for the sending out of Spaulding, Wright, and Miss Farrington came in large part from the Young Men's Methodist Foreign Missionary Society of New England under the leadership of Charles K. True, a graduate (1832) of Harvard University who this year (1833) entered the ministry and was received on trial in the New England Conference.²⁰⁸

At the September 25 meeting the Board gave consideration to the report of a committee, appointed some weeks earlier, on Cox's comprehensive plan for the Liberia Mission. Decision was made: (1) authorizing the Superintendent of the mission to employ as many native preachers as can be used to advantage, drawing on the Board for their support; (2) appropriating \$200. for the support of Isaac Leggins, a Negro preacher employed by Cox to establish a mission at Grand Bassa; (3) approving, "whenever it shall be found practicable and expedient," establishment of a mission at Sego, separate and independent, under the direction "of a missionary sent from this country."²⁰⁹

The missionaries embarked on November 5 and on New Year's Day, 1834, landed at Monrovia, where they were cordially and joyfully received. On the following Sunday services were held in the Methodist church, including the administration of the sacrament of Communion. At once they entered upon a busy program. In January the Monrovia Sunday School Union, auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was organized. A Quarterly Conference was held. On January 10 an Annual Conference was organized, with thirteen members.‡ Before adjourning, the Conference formed itself into a Temperance Society.²¹⁰ On every hand doors of opportunity opened before them, but alas! few were to be entered.

On the outward voyage from America Phebe W. Wright (Mrs. Samuel O. Wright) was beset with forebodings of evil. On December 17, in the course of a letter to the homeland, she wrote:

* Rufus Spaulding during the preceding year had been pastor at Charlestown, Mass. He was admitted on trial in the New England Conference in June, 1827 (*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 531).

† Samuel Osgood Wright (1808-1834) had served during the preceding year on the Dorchester and Braintree Circuit. He was admitted on trial in the New England Conference in 1830 and ordained an elder at the Conference session preceding his outgoing as a missionary to Africa (*ibid.*, II, 65, 198). In addition to his pastorate he was for a time editor of *Zion's Herald*.—James Mudge, *History of the New England Conference* . . . , p. 302.

‡ "The Liberia Annual Conference met . . . [Jan. 10, 1834], the Rev. Rufus Spaulding . . . presiding . . . Resolved: . . . that this Conference adopt the title of the Liberia Annual Conference." ("Journal," ms., p. 1.) Formal General Conference authorization was not given until two years later.—See p. 337.

O, my dear friends, should I shortly fall a victim to the sultry clime to which I am now going, and be forgotten, and should our little band fall, still this infant mission will be remembered.

Thirty-four days after her arrival in Liberia, on February 4, her body was consigned to its final resting place. At the time of her death her husband had been ill for half a month. He lingered for a few weeks, but on March 29 he, too, answered the eternal summons, having been eighty-eight days in Liberia.²¹¹

Spaulding was overtaken by the African fever at about the same time as the Wrights. While the attack in his case seemed less severe than the others, the fever persisted for many weeks and he finally concluded that, if he was to live, he must return to the United States. On May 17, accompanied by his wife, he sailed for home, his health undermined for life. They endeavored to persuade Miss Farrington to return with them, as she had been incapacitated by the fever for almost four months. At first she agreed, but as her departure would leave the mission without missionary oversight she declined to go. The letter recording her decision is worthy of a place for all time in the annals of Christian missions:

The doctor has said it was not possible for my constitution to endure the climate, and advised the missionaries to send me home, which they resolved to do, saying they did not know that the board would keep me here longer. But I have absolutely refused to go. Though to be cut off by the board would be somewhat trying, as it would seem like being turned from my father's house; yet should they do it, I resolve to trust. I laid my life on the altar on leaving America, and I am willing that it should remain there. . . .

. . . I have missed some of the privileges of America since I have been here, but have never had one thought of regret that I came, and have never felt more contented and happy in any place. I love my friends that I have left behind, but I love the cause of Christ better. . . . I have had but a blanket for a pillow some of the time, and no outside covering for the bed, and a very uncomfortable bed during the fever; yet such inconveniences are but trifling. I find nothing in the least discouraging. . . .²¹²

At this juncture—three of the first six missionaries sent to Liberia having died within their first year of service and a fourth, as it appeared later, incapacitated for life—members of the Board began to question whether the Liberia Mission should be continued. At a meeting of the managers on April 16, 1834, James L. Phelps—physician—offered a resolution calling for the early establishment of a missionary station somewhere in the interior, in a region not “liable to the objections which thus far so fatally weigh against Cape Mesurado and the sea board.” The resolution was approved.²¹³

In the fall of 1833 the Maryland Colonization Society had sent out a colony of freedmen to Cape Palmas, the Rev. John Hersey* accompanying the ex-

* John Hersey (?-1862), a Methodist Local Preacher, about 1817 was appointed as clerk in the

pedition as General Agent. His experience in Liberia led him to the conviction that a radical change in missionary policy was imperative. He urged the Board: (1) to abandon Monrovia and establish a mission in the interior of the country, for the most part with teachers rather than preachers as missionaries; (2) to instruct all missionaries to "accommodate their living to the customs and usage of the natives"—partaking of their fare and sleeping on their hard couches; (3) to conform mission buildings to the form and style of native structures; and (4) to be "rigidly economical in their expenses, as well as indefatigable in their efforts."²¹⁴

So far as the records reveal no definite proposal of removal from Monrovia was considered by the Board.* While these developments were under way a new figure appeared on the Liberia scene—a man who was to make a significant and enduring contribution to the missionary program. On April 7, 1834, a special session of the Board of Managers was called at the request of Bishop Hedding. When they came together the Bishop stated that John Seys of the Oneida Conference, who during recent months had been laboring among the Oneida Indians in western New York, had volunteered for service in Africa if another missionary were desired.

John Seys (1799–1872) was a native of Santa Cruz, West Indies. Under the influence of Wesleyan missionaries he had been converted and had entered the ministry. He had lived for varying periods of time on fifteen of the West India Islands—for several years in Trinidad, within ten degrees of the Equator where the seasons, as in Liberia, were wet and dry, and where a fever like the "African fever" was common. He possessed, Bishop Hedding stated, a genuine missionary spirit and was willing to go wherever the Board might choose to send him.

After some discussion, on motion of Dr. David M. Reese, it was voted that in the opinion of the Board the Rev. Mr. Seys has peculiar qualifications for the Liberia Mission, from his tropical constitution, his habits as a teacher, and his familiarity with the African race in the West Indies, and that it be recommended to the Bishops to retain him for that purpose.

The appointment was made. When, shortly afterward, word of the full extent of the personnel loss in Liberia had been received, Bishop Hedding wrote to Seys offering to release him from his appointment if "the recent

General Government Depot in the Choctaw Nation. Among the Choctaw he was known as "the man that talks to the clouds." With a systematic exactitude common to few he adhered to the early Methodist discipline of life. For many years he labored with undiminished zeal among the Indians, among the poor of eastern cities, and in African jungles—his one and only purpose *to be good and to do good to all men*.—Robert Paine, biographical sketch, reprinted from *Nashville Christian Advocate* in J. E. Armstrong, *History of the Old Baltimore Conference* . . . , pp. 186ff.

* As headquarters Monrovia had the advantage of being the capital of the Republic, and the central seat of operations of the American Colonization Society. Cape Palmas, mentioned by John Hersey and others as a desirable location, had been chosen previous to this time by the Protestant Episcopal Church as their primary station although actual headquarters were not established until 1836, the Rev. Thomas E. Savage, M.D., the first Episcopal missionary, arriving on Dec. 25, 1836.

tidings had led him so to desire." The missionary indicated that he had counted the cost and had no desire to be relieved from a work to which he felt God had called him.²¹⁵ However, he wrote to the Board on July 7 asking why immediate effort might not be made to build a mission house and chapel at Cape Mount, "where the white missionary might become acclimated with far less danger," occasionally visiting Monrovia and the other appointments for purposes of supervision.* "I am not satisfied," he concluded:

that all the necessary precautions which have a tendency to keep the system prepared for the attacks of the disease of the climate and enable it to repel them, have been attended to.²¹⁶

Seys embarked on September 2 and landed in Liberia on October 18, 1834. Shortly before his departure Francis Burns, and Eunice Sharp, also a Negro teacher, sailed for Liberia.

The population of the Liberia Colony when Seys arrived was about 3,000.²¹⁷ The centers at which Methodist Societies had been organized, with number of enrolled members, were: Monrovia, 77; Millsburg, 18; Caldwell, 48; New Georgia, 36; Edina, 25; Grand Bassa, 20—a total of members "in Society," of 224. Preaching services were held also at Sasstown and Bushrod Island, native settlements near Monrovia. Each of the principal centers had Methodist day schools—total enrollment about two hundred—and Sunday schools were maintained at all preaching places. In addition to the two missionaries there were thirteen preachers, all Negroes, and six full-time day-school teachers. Property holdings were increasing. A stone church was under construction at Monrovia, toward the cost of which \$1,000. had been subscribed locally. Soon after his arrival Seys purchased a dwelling house and lot at auction for \$675. It was decided to make the school at Millsburg a mechanical arts school, to be called the White Plains Manual Labor School.²¹⁸ Feeling that she could now be spared Miss Farrington left Liberia for home, arriving in New York on April 29, 1835, having survived some twenty attacks of the African fever.

The new Superintendent was well received by the other members of the mission and the effects of his energetic program were soon in evidence. He reported his health as excellent, saying in a letter to the Board, ". . . I seem to breathe my native air."²¹⁹ In April, 1835, Seys returned to the United States for his family, and in June re-embarked for Liberia.

Arrived in Liberia, he was soon after joined by a new recruit. Bishop

* This was the first suggestion made to the Board that the climate of Liberia was not in itself as deadly as had been assumed, and that the dreaded African fever was in reality a form of acclimating fever—unpleasant but, if properly treated, not as serious as commonly supposed. J. W. Lugenbeel who went to Liberia in September, 1843, as Colonial Physician and United States Government Agent maintained that the country had a pleasant and salubrious climate; that the so-called "African Fever" was a form of acclimating fever—sometimes intermittent, sometimes remittent—and that if the patient previously had been in normal health and strength, and received proper medical treatment, was not overly dangerous. The high mortality rate he ascribed chiefly to foreboding fear; lack of proper hygiene and ordinary precaution; and lack of intelligent, skilled medical treatment.—See *Sketches of Liberia* . . . (Washington: 1853), chs. II, VI, VII.

James O. Andrew had informed the Board by letter on January 26, 1835, that at the recent session of the Georgia Conference he had appointed the Rev. John B. Barton (1806-39) missionary to Africa—the first native Georgian to be sent on a foreign mission by the Methodist Church. He had been admitted on trial the preceding year and appointed missionary to the “slaves on Savannah and Back Rivers.” The two missionaries were congenial and worked together during 1836 with much success, reporting at the year’s close 375 members in Society and 128 children in the schools. Confident that he had become sufficiently acclimated to resist attacks of the fever, he returned to Georgia to be married, and on January 12, 1838, with his bride, Eleanor Gilbert Barton, rejoined the mission family. Confidence in his ability to withstand the treacherous climate proved to be misplaced. On March 19, 1839, he died after a brief illness, having served the Christian cause in Africa “with great zeal and usefulness” less than four years.²²⁰ Nor did the family of the Superintendent escape. In the fall of 1835, while the father and the mother were prostrated by fever, a son was carried to the grave.

During the early years much of the success of the Liberia Mission was due to the faithful labors of Negro Local Preachers. Francis Burns on arrival in Liberia was assigned to assist Miss Farrington in the mission school at Monrovia. He had a long and eminently useful career as teacher and preacher.* A. D. Williams, later for a time Lieutenant-Governor of the colony, in 1836 volunteered to go into the Condo region for the purpose of exploring possibilities of a mission. The king, Boatswain, received him kindly and promised patronage and assistance. Moses Jacobs, “a man of deep piety and well-educated,” was appointed to establish the school. George S. Brown, a preacher of unusual ability, emigrated to Liberia in 1837, and shortly thereafter established a mission school in “the Pessah country” named Heddington in honor of Bishop Hedding. At the meeting of the Board on July 22, 1839, a letter from Brown was read, describing his school, and stating that the kings of several neighboring tribes were “earnestly imploring teachers and missionaries.” There were others who rendered equally valuable service.²²¹

The General Conference of 1836 constituted the Liberia Mission a Mission Annual Conference—the first Mission Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—endowing it with all the rights and privileges of other Annual Conferences, excepting only the right of representation in the General Conference, participation in the profits of the Book Concern, and support from the Chartered Fund. The latter right was denied on the ground that members of the Conference derive their support not as those of other Conferences but from the Missionary Society.²²²

In the month of September, 1836, Seys visited the United States, leaving

* For biographical sketch of Francis Burns, see Vol. III.

his family in Liberia, and traveled extensively with the purpose of awakening wider interest and more generous support for the Liberia Mission. On October 15 he again set sail for Africa, accompanied by the Rev. Squire Chase* of the Oneida Conference, a promising missionary recruit, sent to the field by the Board with the expectation that he would be able to develop the Cape Palmas station; and by the Rev. George S. Brown, a Negro missionary. Six months after arriving in Liberia Chase suffered a violent attack of epilepsy, which incapacitated him for service. He returned to the United States disabled, after ten months' absence.²²³

In 1835 Superintendent Seys had been instructed by the Board "to take measures to provide a skillful physician for the African Mission." Why this responsibility was not laid upon the Executive Secretary and the Bishops, where it belonged, is not clear. Eighteen months passed without result. Then, apparently quite unexpectedly, the Secretary reported receipt of a letter from Dr. S. M. E. Goheen of Columbia, Pennsylvania, offering himself for medical service in Liberia. On December 21, 1836, the Board approved his appointment on condition of three or six months' internship in the New York Hospital. In June, 1837, Dr. Goheen sailed for Liberia, the first physician sent to an overseas mission field by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The same ship that carried Dr. Goheen to Liberia also carried the first woman missionary—other than wives of missionaries—sent to an overseas field by the parent Missionary Society. At the Sing Sing (New York) Camp Meeting of 1836, following a missionary address by Dr. Goheen, a note was delivered to Secretary Nathan Bangs, reading:

A sister who has a little money at command gives that little cheerfully, and is willing to give her life as a female teacher if she is wanted.

The note was signed, "Mrs. Ann Wilkins." Without delay she was commissioned as a missionary teacher. She sailed for Liberia June 15, 1837. During the entire period (1832-44) no more effective missionary than Ann Wilkins† was sent to Liberia. Everything that it takes to make a successful Christian teacher she had. She loved children and was deeply devoted to

* Squire Chase (1802-43), a native of Cayuga County, New York, was received as a probationer in the Genesee Conference in July, 1822, and appointed to the St. Lawrence Circuit. In 1831 he became Presiding Elder of the St. Lawrence District, Oneida Conference, and a delegate from the Black River Conference to the General Conference of 1840. A scholarly preacher and of sincere piety, he was a beloved and effective minister and missionary. For memoir see P. Douglass Gorrie, *The Black River Conference Memorial* (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1852), pp. 50ff.

† Ann Wilkins (1806-57) was a native of the state of New York. Her religious background was Quaker and Methodist. A born teacher, her influence on many of her pupils was lifelong. Bishop Joseph C. Hartzell wrote that many years after her death a government commission concerned with settlement of a boundary dispute between Sierra Leone and Liberia encamped at the capital village of a native African tribe. On making inquiry of the natives why they refused to permit Mohammedan missionaries in their midst the commission was told that "years before some of their young people were in a school taught by Ann Wilkins, near Monrovia. There they had learned to read the Bible . . . and had been waiting all these years for 'Ann Wilkins' God to come to them." (Letter to Mrs. Frank Mason North, Feb. 15, 1909.) In nineteen years Ann Wilkins returned to the United States on furlough but twice. She retired in 1856, in feeble health, and died on Nov. 13, 1857. She was buried in Maple Grove Cemetery on Long Island.

her work. She was patient, untiring, understanding, and cheerful. She began teaching in the Liberia Conference Seminary at White Plains in December, 1837.

On March 28, 1839, she wrote:

I have a plan formed for the benefit of the female youth of Africa . . . it is this, a school . . . to be founded on a plan similar to that of the Manual Labor School which is mostly adapted to the education of boys. Though we have three little girls in that institution . . . I would have it located at Millsburgh, where a school is greatly needed, as they have none at present, . . . I would have my Seminary, as I would call it, to be the residence of a number of little orphan girls. . . .

This was the genesis of the Millsburg Female Academy, the first overseas school for girls founded under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was slow in getting under way* but Ann Wilkins was a firm believer in the virtue of patient, persistent effort, and the school was ultimately established on a permanent basis.²²⁴

The Conference year 1838-39 probably marks the high point in the history of the Liberia Mission for the early period (1833-44). The *Twentieth Annual Report of the Missionary Society* informed the Church that seventeen missionaries, white and Negro, were engaged in the service of the mission, including a physician, besides ten teachers, a printer, and a steward in charge of business affairs. The churches reported 420 members; the day schools, 221 pupils; the Sunday schools, 300. Four new stations—Jack's Town, Junk, Sinoe, and Boporo—had been opened the preceding year, and although conditions were unsettled owing to inter-tribal tensions, some progress had been made. From Heddington, the interior station, fifty-nine conversions were reported, and missionary George S. Brown, elated, wrote to Superintendent Seys:

Come up and see the bush burn. Come up and see the desert blossom. Come up and see God convert the heathen. . . . Do not stop to change your clothes.

In 1839, for the first time, the complete *Minutes* of the Liberia Mission Conference were published in the *General Minutes*. They reported fifteen preachers appointed to twelve Circuits and Stations; a total membership of 656; and \$194. contributed "for the support of Missions."

At Monrovia, on the authorization of the Board in 1837, a classical school—the Liberia Conference Seminary, housed in the finest building in the colony—was opened in April, 1839, with the Rev. Jabez Burton, a graduate of Al-

* Writing to Mary W. Mason under date of June 20, 1842, Mrs. Wilkins said, "I have not yet got any native girls under my care. . . . The great difficulty . . . lies in the fact of their being contracted for, for wives at a very early age . . . often in infancy, and sometimes even before they are born."—Original Letters of Ann Wilkins to various correspondents, in the archives of the Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church, New York, N. Y.

legheny College, as principal. Finally, in this same year, on March 15, appeared the first issue of *Africa's Luminary*, a semi-monthly religious periodical, John Seys, Editor, and S. M. E. Goheen, Assistant Editor. In November, 1838, the Board had authorized a printer for Liberia; W. B. Jayne had been employed and sent to the field, and the periodical was one of the first publication enterprises undertaken.²²⁵

In 1839 two additional names were added to the steadily growing death list. The Rev. William Stocker, who arrived in Liberia in January and was placed in charge of the mission at Cape Palmas, was soon attacked by fever and passed away on July 25. Elijah Johnson, a Negro teacher, an immigrant from the United States, met the same fate.²²⁶

The school at Heddington for native children and youth continued to prosper. Reports concerning it awakened the interest of neighboring tribes who sent deputations of their head men for observation and report—committees coming, among others, from the Gola, the Pessi, and the Vai. At Robertsville, another native town, a missionary station was established, a Society organized, and a Sunday school and day school begun. A native chief, named Zoda, volunteered to engage

in missionary excursions through the neighboring tribes, and has met with extraordinary success, in bringing in scores of inquisitive heathen to hear this 'God-palaver,' as it is called by the natives, as well as in recruiting boys for the school. The children of the kings of most of the adjacent tribes are . . . in . . . the schools.

The White Plains Manual Labor School was enlarged and broadened in scope, undertaking not only to teach various handicrafts but also agriculture. In January, 1840, the Board made an appropriation of \$5,000. for the erection of a sawmill, a sugar-mill, and a rice-mill. Operations became so extensive that, to supervise them, it was necessary for Superintendent Seys to remove from Monrovia to White Plains.²²⁷

At the time of the founding of the Liberia Mission and during the early years of its operation a very cordial and cooperative relationship existed between the Colonization Society, the Missionary Society, and the mission. On August 15, 1833, R. R. Gurley, the Corresponding Secretary of the Colonization Society, informed the Missionary Society that

instructions shall be given to the Colonial Agent to make such an appropriation of public lands within the limits of the colony, as sites for buildings required by . . . [the] Society in the prosecution of its great enterprise, as may be necessary to enable the missionaries . . . to go forward in their work in a continued and vigorous manner.²²⁸

In other ways the Colonization Society showed its good will by aiding the mission. About the close of the decade (1839) serious tension developed be-

tween the governor, Thomas Buchanan,* Superintendent Seys, and Dr. Goheen. In time the Colonization Society also became involved, defending the governor against the missionaries, resulting in sharp conflict between the Boards of Managers of the Colonization Society and Missionary Society. Controversy continued for many months. The *Minutes* of meetings of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society for 1840, '41, and '42 are filled with letters, reports, and committee actions on the subject. The case became so involved and so serious that the influence of the mission was not only impaired, but its very existence and that of the colony itself, threatened. It is unnecessary to review the case other than in broad outline.

A significant entry, bearing upon the origin of the difficulty, is found in the *Minutes* of the Board under date of October 17, 1838:

In the course of some remarks made to the Board by the Rev. Jno. Seys, it was stated that our Society had derived a profit of \$2,500. on the merchandize which had been shipped to Africa. Mr. Seys also remarked on the importance of continuing a supply of such articles as might be needed in that country—that such a procedure will be profitable to the Society, and a great blessing to the residents. Whereupon it was

Resolved, that the Rev. John Seys be authorized to purchase and take out with him such articles of merchandize as he may think proper for the interest of the Mission under his charge.²²⁹

The importation of goods for whatever purpose—for the mission, missionaries, or others, interfered with the gains of professional traders who, in turn, enlisted the governor in their behalf. Commercial trading without license was liable to a fine of \$45. for every transaction and, if proven against an agent of the missions, all the property was subject to confiscation.

Whether or not Mr. Seys engaged in commercial trading was made a legal issue when Buchanan made demand for the payment of custom duties to the amount of \$80.30—a demand which Seys resisted. The Colonization Board held that such use as missionaries made of imported articles was “trading” in the sense of the law. Public meetings were held, bitter speeches characterizing both sides. In trial before the Supreme Court of Liberia the jury disagreed. The governor then demanded the recall of Seys and Goheen, insisting that they must leave Liberia or he himself would resign. He also engaged in various acts of petty persecution of the mission.

Dr. Goheen was more particularly related to a different issue, involving fiscal policy. A dearth of gold and silver existed in the colony—a difficulty accentuated by the fact that colonists and traders would not accept Coloniza-

* Thomas Buchanan was “appointed Governor of the Colonies or settlements in Liberia” by the Board of Directors of the American Colonization Society on Dec. 14, 1838.—*The African Repository*, XV (1839), I (January), 26.

tion Society paper or government currency except at a heavy discount.* The credit of the Missionary Society made the promissory notes of the mission as good as gold and these became a preferred circulating medium. In the absence of Seys from the country, Dr. Goheen as Acting Superintendent received instructions to redeem some promissory notes of large amounts and not being able to secure gold or silver for the purpose issued many small due bills which immediately got into circulation. Whereupon a charge of "interfering with the circulating medium of the country" was brought against him and strenuously pressed.

On April 30, 1841, Seys—although he had not been formally recalled—left Liberia for the United States to report in person to the Board. He was accompanied on the trip by his wife and child. In September the Board directed Dr. Goheen to return to answer the allegations made against him. After full hearings the Board, on May 21, 1842, adopted an action expressing complete confidence in the fidelity of Superintendent Seys, regrets that prejudicial reports had been circulated, and thanks for his efficient service. There was some question, because of continued opposition in Liberia, concerning the advisability of his return. He was himself in doubt, and finally—in August—resigned his superintendency and requested transfer to the Oneida Conference. At its session in August, 1842, he was appointed to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

On October 24, 1842, Dr. Goheen appeared before the Board. His hearing was postponed to permit representatives of the Colonization Society to prepare their case. On November 16, he again appeared; the Corresponding Secretary reported that the Board of Directors of the Colonization Society had declined to appear to sustain their charges; Dr. Goheen presented a detailed report of his activities in Liberia, "particularly in regard to his fiscal management of the affairs of the Society" while acting as Superintendent, and by unanimous vote was fully exonerated on all charges.²³⁰

The return of John Seys to the United States had not only left the Liberia Mission without a Superintendent, but also without a white minister. Nor was there in the Conference a Negro minister considered by the Board to possess the necessary qualifications and training for the superintendence. His health greatly improved, though by no means rugged, the thoughts of Squire Chase turned again toward Africa. Although neither Bishop Hedding nor the Board would take responsibility for advising his return, he freely offered his services for the emergency and in January, 1842, accompanied by John G. Pingree of the Maine Conference, sailed for Liberia. He visited all of the stations of the mission, with two exceptions; took upon himself as Acting

* The credit of the Colonization Society was seriously impaired at this time owing to heavy indebtedness and inability to pay its bills promptly.—*Twenty-second Annual Report of the American Colonization Society, in African Repository*, XV (1839), 1 (January), 3.

Superintendent the supervision of all its interests, spiritual and temporal—including many repairs on mission property—and in May, 1843, arrived in New York physically exhausted. While in attendance on the Black River Conference he became suddenly ill of “inflammation of the lungs.” The attack proved fatal, his death occurring on July 26, 1843, while the Conference was still in session.²³¹

Again, the Liberia Mission was without a Superintendent. All efforts of the Board to find a man of maturity and administrative experience to undertake the difficult job had been unavailing. The Board turned once again to John Seys—would he step into the breach? Two years had passed since the death of Governor Buchanan. The hot antagonism of those in Liberia who had sided with the governor against the administration of Seys had had time to cool—though the Colonization Board was still antagonistic. Acceptance would make it necessary for him to leave his wife and four little children in America—Mrs. Seys in precarious health—and go out alone. But Africa was upon his heart; the need was to him the call of imperious duty, and after much prayer he agreed to go. On November 25, 1843, he embarked on his ninth crossing of the Atlantic. How carefully and systematically he had planned the program in advance is shown by the proposals that he laid before the Board for approval:

1st. Appointment of a Colleague to accompany him . . . [suggested] the Rev. D[allas] D. Lore of the Philadelphia Conference. 2nd. Appointment of a [Mission] Physician . . . [suggested] Dr. [S. M. E.] Goheen . . . 3rd. . . . a man to take charge of the Liberia Conference Seminary. 4th. Instructions [asked] respecting continuance of Africa's Luminary. 5th. . . . instruction also about the saw mill. 6th. . . . expression of the Board . . . [concerning] return to the U.S. . . . to stay one year only [or more] before coming home. 7th. . . . particular & definite instructions on . . . issuing due Bills or notes in Settlement of small Bills or accounts.²³²

Seys arrived in Monrovia on January 11, 1844. He was warmly welcomed, not alone by Methodists but also by the citizens and officials in general—including Governor J. R. Roberts. He was soon busily engaged in administrative affairs. Publication of *Africa's Luminary* was resumed. Schools required attention. Quarterly Meetings were held. The Annual Conference was called to meet on February 1. At this session decision was made to open up extensive new work in the interior. Three men were appointed to new stations—one in the “Queah” country and two in the Gola country. When they were ready to depart on February 23, Seys accompanied them, the group traveling with carriers—at first twenty-one; later twenty-nine. For six days they pushed onward, much of the way through unbroken forest, stopping at native villages en route to preach to the people. At Becan town Seys was

prostrated with fever. For one day the caravan halted for recuperation; then pressed on, at several villages finding native Christians—former Hed-dington students. At Grupau, on St. Paul's River, one hundred and fifty miles from Cape Mesurado, Seys suffered a second and more severe attack of fever. Sunday, March 10, was spent here, more than twenty persons expressing a purpose to become Christians. In response to the importunities of King Guzzama, Seys decided to leave A. R. Russel as pastor, calling the place Mount Andrew. Plans were made for a chapel and mission house. Farther on, at King Boto's town, a site was chosen for a third station, with chapel and parsonage. To this station, named Morrisburg, W. P. Kennedy was appointed. They then turned their faces homeward, reaching White Plains on March 21, worn and ill but rejoicing in having succeeded in opening new centers for the preaching of the Gospel.

Later, Seys made a second trip, visiting Cape Palmas. J. B. Russwurm, governor of the colony which had been founded by the State Colonization Society of Maryland and aided by appropriation by the Maryland Legislature, offered to defray the entire cost of a Methodist schoolhouse. The school was built at Barrakka.²³³

As a result of Sey's aggressive program, missionary reinforcements were much needed in Liberia. The Board recommended to the Bishops appointment of two additional missionaries, but available candidates could not be found. A strong sentiment against colonization had developed among freedmen and none was willing to volunteer for the service.²³⁴

Reports coming to Seys from home were not encouraging. His wife's health had not improved. His own strength, as a result of repeated attacks of fever, was declining. Under these circumstances he reluctantly decided that he must tender his resignation as Superintendent. This he did, to the great regret of the Board.* His comprehensive, detailed report of the mission for 1844-45 is included in the *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Missionary Society*. Eleven years after its founding (1833-44) the Liberia Conference reported seventeen preachers appointed to Circuits and Stations; nine lay missionaries—teachers, native interpreters, a business agent, and a printer—and 874 "members in Society."²³⁵

BEGINNINGS OF METHODIST SOUTH AMERICA MISSIONS

History determined that Protestant Anglo-Saxon peoples should come into possession of North America. Spain and France each had a chance to es-

* John Seys (1799-1872) was admitted on trial in the Oneida Conference in 1830 and assigned to the Ogdensburg and Heuvel Circuit. In 1833 he was appointed to the Oneida (Indian) Mission (*Gen'l Minutes*, II, 70, 72, 210.) In 1858 he was appointed, by the United States, Government Agent in Liberia for Freedmen, a position which he held until 1864. Later he was engaged in work for the freedmen in the South. In 1868 he became Minister and Consul-General of the United States to Liberia. His death occurred in Springfield, Ohio, on Feb. 9, 1872.

establish rule over the continent but neither pursued a vigorous colonization policy and both lost their opportunity of permanent dominion.

The South American story is different. In that continent the Spanish and Portuguese, following the military conquests of the *conquistadores*, settled in sufficient numbers and amalgamated with the native population to a sufficient extent to assure the permanence of Iberian culture. In that culture Roman Catholicism was a predominant element. Spaniards, Portuguese, French, and Italians each made their racial and cultural contribution to a new variety of the Latin spirit, over which for three hundred years the Roman Church held sway with an imperial force that is "a legacy of the Latin genius."²³⁶

The political ideals that found expression in the Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary War, and the French Revolution, penetrated in no small measure the colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal in the Western hemisphere. One by one the South American colonies revolted, declared their independence, and set up constitutional republics.* Largely political in its motivation, as it was, the revolution included as an inherent element a determination on the part of the new states to free themselves from clerical political domination. Since, throughout South America, State and Church had been to all intents and purposes one, revolt against the Roman Catholic Church became widespread among the masses of the people. Thus was opened for Protestantism a challenging missionary opportunity.²³⁷

That Methodist leaders were eager to enter the newly opened door is evident from various pronouncements from the period of the founding of the Missionary Society. Finally, on March 23, 1825, Nathan Bangs stated to the Board of Managers of the Society that he knew of a competent person ready to enlist as a South America missionary. The announcement resulted in the adoption of a resolution:

that . . . [the Bishops be informed] that if any opening should occur for a mission to South America, and a suitable person should offer, the Board deem it very desirable that such a mission should be established.²³⁸

Six months later, on October 19, 1825, the Corresponding Secretary was directed to inquire of the Bishops whether any measures had been taken by them to send a mission to South America. The *Minutes* record no answer to the inquiry.

On March 15, 1826, a committee, George Suckley,† chairman, was ap-

* The first South American colony to declare its independence and promulgate a federal constitution was Venezuela, in 1811. The federal constitution of Brazil was not adopted until 1891. For account of the many South American revolutions for independence, see A. Curtis Wilgus, *The Development of Hispanic America* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1941), chs. XVI-XXXIV.

† George Suckley, a lay member of the Board, was a merchant engaged in the South American trade. He owned a steamboat on Lake Maracaibo and offered to place it at the disposal of any missionary who would use it in visiting the villages on the shore, carrying the Gospel to the people.

pointed to consider "whether it be expedient to send a missionary to South America." The committee reported on May 3, suggesting the sending as a missionary "a person of some trade or business" as more likely "to gain access to the inhabitants and lighten the expenses of the Mission."²³⁹

A year later (April, 1827), in their *Eighth Annual Report* (1826-27), the Board renewed its appeal:

Are there not men to be found of sufficient zeal and hardy enterprise to embark in this work? The managers are persuaded there are. And they are no less persuaded that the moment such a mission should be announced, abundant means would be furnished for its support.²⁴⁰

Here the matter rested for five years. Then, in 1832, the General Conference called for a missionary survey of South America for the purpose of determining, on the basis of reliable information, the most promising fields for missionary effort.

Interest in Buenos Aires as a center for missionary operations had in the meantime been stimulated by representations made to the Board, first in a letter from that city, and later by an appeal personally made in a meeting of the Board. Concerning the communication from a Methodist layman residing in Buenos Aires, received soon after the adjournment of the 1832 General Conference, Nathan Bangs states the letter conveyed the information that the writer "had succeeded in forming a small [Methodist] class, and that they were quite desirous of having a missionary . . . sent among them."²⁴¹ On May 21, 1834, Thomas Reed, from Buenos Aires, attended a meeting of the Board, "giving it as his opinion that a Missionary from the Society would be gladly received and be the means of doing much good." Believing these representations to be "a providential indication of an opening into the Continent of South America," the managers of the Board adopted at the May 21 meeting the following resolution:

that in the opinion of this Board, it is highly desirable and important, that a Missionary be appointed and sent to Buenos Aires, in South America, at the earliest possible date, and that this resolution be communicated to the Bishops by the Recording Secretary, together with a brief account of the communication of brother Thomas Reed, late a resident of that city.²⁴²

Under the stimulus of the General Conference action and that of the Board, search was begun for a person competent to make such a survey. Choice finally settled on Fountain E. Pitts,* who was in his second year of service at McKendree Church, Nashville, Tennessee—the first pastor of the church. On

* Fountain E. Pitts (1808-74), as this record indicates, was a man of more than ordinary ability. He was a native of Kentucky, was licensed to preach at sixteen, and admitted on trial in the Kentucky Conference shortly after his seventeenth birthday (1824). Following his return from South America, he served for several years (1836-44) as Presiding Elder in the Tennessee Conference and later as pastor of large churches.

June 28, 1835, Mr. Pitts sailed from Baltimore for Brazil, landing at Rio de Janeiro on August 19.

In a stay of about two weeks at Rio de Janeiro, Mr. Pitts succeeded in forming a small Methodist Class, and encouraged by this success petitioned the Board to send a permanent missionary as soon as possible. In response to his appeal Bishop Elijah Hedding appointed Justin Spaulding* of the Maine Conference a missionary to Brazil. On March 22, 1836, he sailed from New York for the mission field²⁴³—the first Methodist missionary to be appointed for permanent service in South America.†

From Rio, Mr. Pitts proceeded to Montevideo, capital of Uruguay, where in the course of a brief stay, he also succeeded in forming a small Methodist Society, promising that a permanent missionary would be sent as soon as possible. He then went on to Buenos Aires, the special destination of his journey, where "he met with a cordial reception by a few pious people, and more especially by some Protestant ministers."²⁴⁴ Owing to the necessity of Protestant ministers gaining government permission for the exercise of their ministry, there was serious question whether Mr. Pitts would be allowed to conduct religious services. He was fortunate, however, in addition to his ministerial credentials, in being able to present highly complimentary letters from President Andrew Jackson, fellow Tennessean, and Henry Clay, internationally known United States Senator. These were effective in securing for him prompt government recognition and within a few days he was successful in renting a commodious room, centrally located, where he was soon preaching to large, attentive congregations, who received the Word with gladness. Here, within a few weeks, he organized his third Methodist Society and made preliminary arrangements for the building of a church.²⁴⁵ He arrived in Philadelphia in the spring of 1836—the return voyage from La Plata requiring fifty-two days—having spent about six months in South America.²⁴⁶

At a meeting of the Board on September 13, 1836, the Corresponding Secretary informed the managers that John Dempster‡ of the Oneida Conference had been appointed "as a missionary for Buenos Aires."²⁴⁷ On October 14 he

* Justin Spaulding (1802-65), a native of Vermont, was received on trial in the New England Conference in 1823. He was pastor at Augusta, Me., when appointed as a missionary. Following his return from Brazil he transferred to the New Hampshire Conference and was appointed senior preacher on the Winchester and Richmond Circuit.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 394; II, 329; III, 264.

† M'Ferrin states that Fountain E. Pitts "was the pioneer missionary in South America." (*History of Methodism in Tennessee*, III, 117.) This is in a sense true, since he laid the foundations for Methodist work in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. However, M'Ferrin also states his appointment was for "missionary exploration" (*ibid.*, p. 443), and as soon as he had spied out the land he returned to resume his work in the Tennessee Conference.

‡ John Dempster (1794-1863), a native of New York, was a son of James Dempster who came to America as one of John Wesley's missionaries. He was admitted on trial at the Genesee Conference in July, 1816, and appointed as a missionary to the St. Lawrence Circuit, Lower Canada, where he remained one year. From 1817-35 he served as pastor and Presiding Elder. He was an earnest advocate of theological training for ministers. In 1847 he established the Biblical Institute at Concord, N. H., and in 1855 a school at Evanston, Ill., which later became Garrett Biblical Institute. He was planning the establishment of a school for ministers in California when on Nov. 28, 1863, he died as the result of a surgical operation. He was a man of exceptional ability—a pioneer missionary and eminent educator.

sailed from New York and on his arrival at Buenos Aires was cordially received. Dempster was a man of exceptional qualifications for his missionary task: unusual native ability, thorough preparation, broad experience, sincere piety, and deep interest in education. The foreign community of the capital included some five thousand people—chiefly English, Scotch, and American—among whom Dempster's preaching very soon commanded such wide attention that the rented quarters would not accommodate the congregations that assembled to hear him. Meanwhile, impressed with the opportunity and need for an English language school, he urged the Board to send out a well-qualified teacher. On March 28, 1838, in response to his appeal, the managers took the following action:

Resolved, that . . . [a teacher] be procured for Buenos Aires. . . . And moreover as brother Dempster's letter sets forth the necessity of having a house of worship for the success of his Mission, therefore,

Resolved, that a sum [in hand from contributions for the mission] not exceeding \$1500. be appropriated for that purpose, and that an appeal be made to the members and friends of the Church for [additional] aid. . . .²⁴⁸

Four months later (July 18, 1838) further action of the Board authorized Dempster to proceed in the erection of a church at a total expense not to exceed \$10,000.²⁴⁹ Unsettled conditions in the Argentine, growing out of civil war, caused many of the foreign residents to leave Buenos Aires, and seriously interfered with carrying forward the building project.

On May 4, 1838, on recommendation of the President and members of the faculty of Wesleyan University, Hiram A. Wilson, a graduate of Wesleyan, was employed as a teacher in the Buenos Aires Mission at a salary of \$750. per year, plus \$100. for an out-going outfit and the price of his passage. The school was opened and in December, 1840, the Rev. Orrin A. Howard arrived, with his wife, on the field as additional teachers.²⁵⁰ The student body included children from American, English, and German families, and two Indian boys from the island of Java.

Early in 1840 Dempster found it necessary to return temporarily to the United States. He was present at a meeting of the Board held on June 8, 1840, and explained the reasons for his furlough and the circumstances that had prevented the completion of the church building. He urged the importance of purchasing premises "for an Academy and Boarding School," estimating the cost at \$5,000., of which he asked \$3,000. from the Board. Without obligating the Board, the managers approved the purchase of property for a boarding school and authorized Dempster "to employ himself in taking subscriptions and collections for this special object" during his stay in the United States.²⁵¹ About midsummer, Dempster returned to Buenos Aires, ac-

company by Mrs. Jenkins, who had been employed by the Board as a teacher of the mission school.

During these years little had been done at Montevideo. In the autumn of 1838—three years after the visit of Fountain E. Pitts—Dempster went to the city “to ascertain the state of things” and was much impressed after “conversations with several influential persons in that city, native citizens and others” with the missionary opportunity. In response to Dempster’s representations, the Rev. William H. Norris* of the New York Conference, on July 26, 1839, embarked at New York and “after a passage of seventy-seven days arrived [at Montevideo] in safety, in good health and spirits.” Such was the response to his ministry that within five months he was impelled to write to the Board urging an appropriation for funds to assist in the building of a church. On March 25, 1840, the Board authorized Norris to proceed in procuring a site and erecting “a house of worship, provided one-half of the expense of said site and building be paid by the people of Montevideo,” the total expense not to exceed \$12,000—the property to be “secured to the mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . in Montevideo.”²⁵² The site was immediately bought and paid for but delay was encountered in securing consent from the government for the building of a church. Month after month negotiations were continued and finally by September 9, 1841, Norris had succeeded in obtaining a decree from the governor authorizing the consuls of England, Sweden, and the United States “to erect a temple which may serve for the exercise of the worship of their countrymen, as also for the establishment of a public school for the children of the same nations.”²⁵³

Meanwhile serious complications had developed both at the home base and on the field. The Missionary Society was deeply involved in debt and had determined on a policy of retrenchment in all missions—domestic and foreign. Moreover, this was the period of Argentina’s war with Uruguay,²⁵⁴ and conditions incidental to war not only made missionary work difficult but threatened to make it impossible. A committee of the Board, to which South American affairs had been referred, reported on April 19, 1841, including among other recommendations that “measures be taken to discontinue the Mission at Montevideo at the earliest possible period.”²⁵⁵ On April 30, the managers adopted the following resolution:

that this Board advise the Bishop having charge of foreign missions to discontinue

* William H. Norris (1801–78), a native of Maine, was admitted on trial to the New York Conference in 1825. For ten years, 1826–36, he was a member of the Maine Conference, serving 1833–34 as Presiding Elder of the Portland District. In 1836 he was appointed to Sands St., Brooklyn, and in 1839 missionary to Montevideo. Returning in 1847, he was again appointed to Sands St. He served later as Presiding Elder of the New Haven, the New York, and the Long Island Districts of the New York East Conference. In 1863 he became agent of the American Bible Society in Panama and Central America, and in 1864 was appointed to assist in raising funds and in superintending the building of a new Methodist church and school in Buenos Aires. He was superannuated in 1869. He was a devoted pastor, an able administrator, and an effective preacher and missionary. (For obituary, see *Gen’l Minutes, Meth. Episc. Ch.*, 1879, pp. 33f.)

the Mission at Monte Video, and in case it be discontinued that brother Norris be directed to dispose of the property* belonging to the Mission to the best advantage.²⁵⁶

Four months later (August 21, 1841) Bishop Hedding notified the Board of his intention to write Brother Norris, recalling him from the Montevideo Mission, it being evident that "in the present disturbed state of affairs nothing can be accomplished."

Evidently William H. Norris was not inclined to retire precipitately from a work to which he had dedicated himself. On February 2, 1842, the Corresponding Secretary reported to the Board the receipt of a letter from Norris addressed to Bishop Hedding, enclosing a communication signed by John Tarros, Swedish and Norwegian Consul-General at Montevideo, and two other laymen asking for Norris' continuance. He also reported Bishop Hedding's approval of Norris remaining at Montevideo for one year, or "as long as he may judge it prudent so to do, according to the state of affairs in that country"—support to be provided locally. Action was then taken to this effect:

Resolved, that in the judgment of this Board the Rev. Wm. H. Norris should remain at Monte Video in accordance with the proposition made on behalf of the congregation, and with the assurance that the support of the Mission for one year from March 1st, 1842, be provided for without expense to this Board.²⁵⁷

On March 16, 1842, the Corresponding Secretary reported a letter from Norris, stating that circumstances having changed since he had previously written, he would leave Montevideo about the middle of March. Thus closed the first chapter of Methodist missionary work in Uruguay.

Soon after the return of Dempster to Buenos Aires, in the latter part of 1840, internal difficulty developed in the Buenos Aires Mission—the precise character of which is not revealed by the extant records of the Missionary Society. The *Minutes* of the Board, under date of March 17, 1841, contain this statement:

Whereas information has been received from brother Dempster that Mrs. Jenkins, who was employed by this board as an assistant Teacher in Buenos Aires, now under the Superintendence of brother Dempster, has evinced a disposition not to submit to the instructions furnished her by our Corresponding Secretary, but manifested a determination to act independently of the Superintendent, therefore

Resolved, that our Treasurer be and hereby is instructed not to pay any drafts which may be drawn in favor of Mrs. Jenkins, until further orders.²⁵⁸

A later reference in the *Minutes* characterizes communications received from Dempster, Norris, Howard, and Mrs. Jenkins as "of a painful character," showing "very serious difficulty." On April 30, 1841, the Board by

* On May 21, 1842, William H. Norris delivered to the Board \$3,150. as proceeds of sale of the Montevideo property.—*Minutes, B.M.*, IV, 130.

formal resolution ratified "the act of Brother Dempster in dismissing Mrs. Jenkins from the service of the mission" at Buenos Aires, qualifying the action by saying "unless she forthwith submit herself to the authority of the Superintendent, she be instructed to return to the United States," or if she should remain in South America it must needs be at her own expense.²⁵⁹

At this same meeting the Board adopted another resolution, the ultimate effect of which could not be other than to bring the Buenos Aires Mission to an end:

that in view of the political condition of the country, and the small prospect of usefulness at Buenos Aires [as judged] by the communications of brother Dempster . . . any further remittance of funds [be withheld] to that Mission except for the salaries of those employed by the Board, and for the fulfillment of those engagements already made by order of this board respecting the Church, and that Bro. Dempster be officially instructed to discontinue any further buildings, and otherwise restrict the expenditures of that Mission, and that he be informed that the Board cannot consent, under present circumstances to send another teacher, even to fill the place of Bro. Wilson, who is now on his return to the United States.²⁶⁰

That the intent of this action was nothing less than the closing of the Buenos Aires Mission—if the verbiage of the resolution leaves any doubt—is evident from later actions. Within a few months Dempster returned from South America. At a meeting of the Board he expressed apprehension of censure for failing to carry out the plan "for the establishment of the seminary" for which he had procured contributions. Whereupon, by formal motion at the July 23, 1842, meeting of the Board, the following resolution was adopted:

Whereas the Rev. J. Dempster was authorized by this Board to collect money in . . . [this] country for erection of a school in Buenos Aires, and

Whereas, the necessities of the Treasury have made it necessary for the Board to abandon the enterprise, & to order Bro. Dempster not to carry it into effect, therefore

Resolved, that the Board assume the whole responsibility of the failure to appropriate the monies collected by Bro. Dempster, to the object for which they were collected.²⁶¹

John Dempster's tenure in Buenos Aires was brief—only about five years, all told, upon the field. Yet within this period he had laid enduring foundations. He had gained the respect of the foreign community and of a few, at least, of the citizens. He had built up a large congregation and had organized a church. He had established a Sunday school, and a day school which had commanded the loyalty of pupils and parents. He had built a parsonage and had a church edifice under construction. He had accomplished little in the direction of founding a mission in Spanish—the vernacular of the people of

Argentina—but given time that would certainly have followed. His procedure, that of gaining the strong support of the influential English-speaking community and of establishing an evangelical school for the Christian education of children and youth, was thoroughly sound and in time would have justified itself.

At the June 15, 1842, meeting of the Board, a communication was presented from representatives of the foreign community of Buenos Aires proposing to support a missionary for two years and asking for the appointment of William H. Norris—offering \$1,000. per year if Norris should be sent or, if someone unknown to them should be appointed, \$700. per year. At their next meeting (June 17) the Board recommended to the Bishop the appointment of a missionary in response to the Buenos Aires appeal. Bishop Beverly Waugh objected to the recommendation, and the Board on July 12 resolved “not to recede from the resolution” of June 17, reaffirming their recommendation. Bishop Waugh yielded and Norris immediately began preparation for the outgoing to Buenos Aires.²⁶²

On Christmas Eve (1842) Norris arrived at his destination. Seven miles from port on the broad bay of the *Rio de la Plata* a boat filled with eager friends met his ship and conveyed him to lodgings that had been prepared in advance for his coming. On January 8, 1843, the new church was dedicated, Norris preaching the dedicatory sermon from Isa. LVI, 3-7. The edifice, while not very large, was neat and well-built, constructed of brick, with slate roof and stuccoed front. The ceremonies of dedication were impressive and the congregation was filled with the spirit of gladness and praise. Writing on February 19, 1843, Norris tells with restrained enthusiasm of the resumption of the missionary program:

The congregation still exceeds our expectations. . . . The Sunday school was organized four sabbaths since. The missionary elected himself superintendent, secretary, and librarian, and regularly discharges all the duties of his offices, besides visiting absent children, and looking up new scholars. Eight of the nine teachers are men of tried religious character, and experienced Sunday school teachers: five are Methodists, one is a Congregationalist, one a Baptist, and one a Presbyterian. We have fifty names on the register, including children of four nations. . . .

The society which was formed to sustain public worship in our church, increases in numbers. . . . Only a small proportion of its members are Methodists: the majority are of different churches and nations, and a portion belong to no denomination. . . .

Again, a few months later, Norris wrote:

. . . In one department of the school a Bible class, composed of young men, had been established, which is supposed to be the only institution of the kind in all South America.²⁶³

An auspicious beginning! And the later months of 1843 fulfilled the prom-

ise of these early weeks. Eight subscribers were enrolled for the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. The Methodist Class increased slowly in number. Gains were recorded both by immigration and conversion. The congregation contributed for repairs, salary, and general expense almost \$1,800. Urgent demands were made for the re-establishment of the day school and Norris sent to the Board an urgent plea for re-enforcement.

But the times were evil. Civil war raged in Argentina. Each year difficulties intensified—1846 the hardest of all. During 1845–46 the port of Buenos Aires was blockaded by the British and French.²⁶⁴ The English-speaking community was almost broken up, many leaving Buenos Aires—some going to Montevideo, others returning to England and Scotland. No longer was the Society for Promoting Christian Worship able to sustain the mission and petitioned the Missionary Society for relief. Fortunately a loyal layman of Newark, New Jersey, tided over the emergency by making up the total arrearage for 1846.²⁶⁵ In midsummer of 1847 Norris returned to the United States.²⁶⁶ He was succeeded by the Rev. Dallas D. Lore, of the Philadelphia Conference.

Justin Spaulding began his work in Rio de Janeiro in 1836 by preaching in a private room to as many as would attend. In his little congregation were a few "who were willing to unite with him in his pious endeavors to spread Scriptural truth and holiness among the people."²⁶⁷ As a means of creating interest in his mission and message he and his little band of helpers began the distribution of copies of the New Testament and of the Bible in the Portuguese language to as many as would receive them.* Gradually the congregation increased in number. In June, 1836, Spaulding joyfully reported the enrollment of thirty children in a Sunday school that he had organized. Two of the small classes were Negro children, in one of which Portuguese was used in teaching the pupils and, in the other, English. This, says Reid, "was probably the first effort of the kind made in South America for the poor, degraded, and oppressed colored people of the continent." The Methodist Sunday school of Bangor, Maine, sent weekly contributions to aid in establishing a Sunday school library.²⁶⁸

The *Eighteenth Annual Report*, presented at the June, 1837, anniversary meeting of the Missionary Society, announced that Spaulding had succeeded in forming a small Methodist Society and that he had opened a day school, "at the earnest solicitation of the people, which is well attended by the children of the English and American citizens."²⁶⁹ So encouraging were the prospects that in response to Spaulding's appeal for assistance the Board sent to the field, by appointment of Bishop Beverly Waugh, the Rev. Daniel P. Kidder

* Here, as elsewhere in South America, missionary effort was much aided by the American Bible Society which supplied the Scriptures gratuitously for distribution.

and his wife of the Genesee Conference and, as teachers, R. M'Murdy, a Local Preacher, and Miss Marcella Russell. The party sailed from the port of Boston on November 12, 1837, and on arrival at Rio "entered upon their work with cheerfulness and diligence." By the spring of 1838, the Board announced, the Methodist Society had increased to eleven members.²⁷⁰

By this time the opponents of evangelical religion had awakened to what was going on in their midst and "no little opposition began to be manifested." A periodical bearing the title *O Catholico* was started, with the express purpose of opposing the Methodist activities. It was issued for only one month but was revived under a different title, *O Catholico Fluminense*, of which, again, only four issues were printed. These periodicals specialized in low and scurrilous attacks upon the missionaries. Pamphlets and books of like character next appeared—one under the title *Desagravo de Clero, e do povo Catholico Brasileiro* or *A Refutation of the Lies and Calumnies of an Imposter, who is entitled Missionary of Rio de Janeiro, sent by the Methodist Episcopal Society of New York to Civilize and Convert to Christianity the Brazilians*. The pamphlet filled with such epithets as "liar" and "false prophet" was aimed particularly at Dr. Kidder who, having quickly mastered the Portuguese language, traveled extensively from city to city and village to village conversing with the people and distributing tracts and Bibles. Among the cities visited by him within a few months were Bahia, Maceio, Pernambuco, Olinda, and Para. His activities—and, consequently growth in membership—were hindered by the law of the country which prohibited preaching to the people in their own language. While the people in general treated the missionaries with respect—some manifesting courtesy and affection—others influenced by the calumnies of priests circulated scandalous tales and engaged in petty persecution. Letters written to the Board by Spaulding, dated March 8 and 10, 1838, describe "the strong opposition by the Catholics of Rio de Janeiro against the progress of missionary efforts." A letter from Kidder written on March 19 contains an account of persecutions suffered.²⁷¹ One of Spaulding's reports to the Board had been translated into Portuguese and published as a pamphlet with annotations, charging the Methodists "with almost every crime in the catalogue of sin." Opposition to the day school developed—doubtless influenced by intensified Catholic opposition to the mission—and within a year after their arrival Mr. and Mrs. M'Murdy, discouraged by the difficulties encountered, resigned and returned to the United States.²⁷² Some members of the Missionary Society had cherished anticipations of quick return on the Board's investment of men and money and openly voiced their disappointment at the meagre visible results achieved. After the M'Murdys' resignation the day school was closed—Nathan Bangs says it had not answered expectations "and was therefore abandoned in despair."²⁷³ The

Twentieth Annual Report of the Missionary Society has a milder statement: the Rio de Janeiro Mission "has not yet resulted in much visible fruit."²⁷⁴

Soon after, calamity befell the home of Dr. Kidder. He was in the midst of preparation of a series of sermons in Portuguese which he hoped to have opportunity to deliver, when Mrs. Kidder was smitten with fatal disease and her body consigned to a Brazilian grave. Overwhelmed with grief, bearing in his arms his infant son, Dr. Kidder embarked for New York,* arriving there in June, 1840. His removal left Spaulding alone in the Brazil Mission. Enemies of the work took advantage of the almost disrupted program by sending to the Board a report that "the Mission was without credit or reputation" and urging the recall of Spaulding—a communication which deeply disturbed some of the already discouraged members of the Society. It was referred to a committee which on May 19, 1841—stating that they had examined the subject "with all the attention which its importance demands"—presented a report that clearly reflects the prevailing attitude of disillusionment within the Board with regard to the possibilities of the South American program as a whole:

They have taken into consideration the still unsettled state of civil Society in Brazil, the supremacy of Roman Catholic influence, the guarded and in some measure, equivocal provisions for religious toleration, and the many obstacles in the way of gaining access to the citizens of the country on account of their servile superstition on the one hand and their gross infidelity on the other. They have also had in view the fact that already more than \$16,000. have been expended on this mission without securing a permanent or prosperous establishment. . . . They think that there has been no want of zeal, fidelity or devotion to the cause, on the part of those who have labored at this station, and fully believe that they have done all that could be done under the peculiar circumstances in which they have been placed.²⁷⁵

The committee concluded their report by advising that (1) an additional missionary should not be sent to Rio de Janeiro; but that (2) Spaulding should not be recalled. The report was adopted by the Board.

This was the beginning of the end of the first mission to Brazil. The *Twenty-second Annual Report* (1840-41), following a brief notation listing the missionaries remaining in the field—Spaulding alone at Rio; Dempster, Wilson, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard at Buenos Aires (Mrs. Jenkins' name not included in the list); and Norris at Montevideo—summarizes results to May, 1841, in a realistic statement which breathes a spirit of pessimism:

Indeed, at all the stations, little else has been done than to instruct the children of the English and American residents, and preach to their parents; very

* Just at this time Dempster was leaving Buenos Aires, having asked that his place be supplied during his absence. The Board advised that Kidder be sent, and on March 18, announcement was made in the *Twenty-first Annual Report of the Missionary Society* (1839-40) that he had been transferred, word not having reached New York of Mrs. Kidder's death.

few of the natives of the country being at all accessible. Our missionaries have been enabled, however, to circulate [Spanish and] Portuguese Bibles and Testaments, for which they have been indebted to the liberality of the American Bible Society. . . . Something has likewise been done in the way of tract distribution. On the whole, however, we regret to say that our labors thus far in South America have been less productive of visible good than we had hoped. Hence the board have not felt authorized to appropriate any further sums toward the buildings contemplated and in progress, until peace is restored, and future advices from our missionaries shall justify it.²⁷⁶

Concerning Spaulding's activities during the ensuing eleven months the existing records of the Board are silent. The *Minutes* of a Board meeting held on April 18, 1842, contain the notation that Spaulding, recently arrived from Rio de Janeiro, addressed the meeting. Two days later, on April 20, the Board approved a resolution providing that Spaulding's "salary [should] be continued until [the meeting of] the Maine Conference."²⁷⁷

Announcement of the discontinuance of the Brazil Mission was made in the *Twenty-third Annual Report* (1841-42):

The board regret to say that this [the Rio de Janeiro] mission has been given up. But though the state of the treasury has not warranted the continuance of a mission which only gave a distant promise of the consummation of the object for which it was established . . . yet there is no evidence that the money and labour spent upon the mission have been in vain.²⁷⁸

The action weighed deeply upon the conscience of some, at least, of the leaders of the Church. At the 1842 anniversary meeting of the Missionary Society, second session, held on May 22, the following resolution, offered by Jesse T. Peck, was passed:

the necessity of abandoning any of our missionary stations is a source of deep and heartfelt regret, and . . . the recall of our missionaries from South America, so far as it was occasioned by the embarrassment of the treasury is a reproach to the church and an evidence of criminal delinquency.²⁷⁹

Years later, commenting on the drastic action of the Board in abandoning South America as a missionary field,* Missionary Secretary J. M. Reid wrote: "the necessities of the treasury were imperious, and the mission was accordingly abandoned."²⁸⁰ Some retrenchment, because of tight credit, was undoubtedly required but complete withdrawal from South America was not necessary. In the history of Christianity there have been many times of temporary crisis when missionaries and missionary administrators have realized that the demands of the Kingdom of God are even more imperious than the necessities of the treasury. In this instance, it is significant to note, by the time the last of the missionaries had closed out their work and arrived in New

* Abel Stevens' guarded comment was: "Methodism has seldom made such a retreat from a field once effectually entered."—*Op. cit.*, p. 180.

York the financial situation throughout the nation had begun to improve, the missionary debt had been materially reduced, and income was again on the upgrade.

A HOUSE DIVIDED

The sectionalism that was manifest in American society from colonial days onward was reflected within the Churches—in Methodism, because of its nationwide spread, much more than in some other denominations. While the outward semblance of unity was maintained, an inner cleavage gradually developed, steadily widening and deepening. Bishop Joshua Soule, though a native of New England, cast in his lot with the South. He assumed the episcopal office in 1824 but did not preside over any of the northern Conferences until 1831. Bishop Elijah Hedding made only one tour of the southern Conferences between 1824, the year of his election, and 1844—that in 1831, seven years after becoming a Bishop. The General Conference of 1824 authorized the Bishops to elect a fraternal delegate to the British Conference. Bishops McKendree, George, Soule, and Hedding met in Baltimore in 1826 to choose a delegate, Bishop Roberts not attending. McKendree and Soule voted for William Capers of South Carolina; George and Hedding proposed either Willbur Fisk of New England or Ezekiel Cooper of Philadelphia. Neither side would yield and the election was put aside for one year. The next year the Bishops came together again. Both sides held to their former nominations and Bishop Roberts refused to take the responsibility of casting the deciding vote. After two days, the group adjourned without having elected a representative and no delegate was sent either in 1826 or 1827²⁸¹ to the British Conference.*

Various divisive influences contributed to the difficulty, but the principal stone of stumbling and rock of offence was the slavery issue. The history of the relation of Methodism to slavery, vitally affecting the total life and work of the Church, is a long and complex story which must be reserved to the second volume. The Committee of Nine, authorized on June 5 by the General Conference of 1844, on June 8 reported a Plan of Separation which, "should the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection," laid down certain rules to be observed, fixed the territorial limits of the separated bodies, allowed ministers of every grade to determine their ecclesiastical connection, allocated to the southern organization all rights of property in meeting houses, parsonages, colleges and schools within the southern territory, and provided for a division of the

* At the General Conference of 1828 the failure to elect was reported to that body in the "Address" of the Bishops. The General Conference elected William Capers as fraternal delegate. He attended the British Conference which convened in City Road Chapel, London, on July 30, 1828.

Book Concern as soon as the Annual Conferences should remove the restriction on the powers of the General Conference to do so.²⁸²

The report of the Committee of Nine was unanimous. Its adoption was moved by Charles Elliott of the Ohio Conference; seconded by Leonidas L. Hamline, also of the Ohio Conference, and by James Porter of the Missouri Conference, and was adopted by a large majority. In May, 1845, it was ratified by the Louisville Convention made up of delegates from the thirteen southern Annual Conferences. By these actions division became an accomplished fact.

American Methodism was now composed of six denominations: the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; the Methodist Protestant Church; the African Methodist Episcopal Church; the African Methodist Episcopal, Zion, Church; and the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America.

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7. 1. Cor. 1:21, American Standard Version of the Bible (New York: Nelson, 1901).
8. Augustine Birrell, "John Wesley, His Times and Work," ch. II in George Eayrs, *Letters of John Wesley . . .*, p. 9.
9. James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, G. B. Hill, Ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1887), III, 230. Again, Johnson says, "He can talk well on any subject," and he writes to Martha Wesley: "I hate to meet your brother, the dog enchants you with his conversation and then breaks away to go and visit some old woman."
10. George Otto Trevelyan, *The American Revolution* (New York: Longmans, 1903), Part II, I, 5; Woodrow Wilson, *John Wesley's Place in History* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1915), p. 27.
11. John Wesley, *Letters*, July 28, 1775, VI, 166f.: "Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom He has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream. Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, 'He shall not cry'; the word properly means, He shall not

scream. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud, often vehemently; but I never scream, I never strain myself. I dare not; I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul."

12. Matt. 10. 23.

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18. John Wesley, *Works*, XII, 254.

19. W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Appleton, 1882), II, 682.

20. See accounts of illnesses: *Journal*, II, 512ff.; 519f.; III, 347ff.; IV, 77f.; 87ff.; VI, 3; 66ff.; 398ff.; 438ff. One of the contrarieties noted by Adolf Deissmann in the apostle Paul (*Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926], p. 63), is to be seen in Wesley: "his ailing body and his physical endurance." (G. Eayrs, *Letters of John Wesley . . .*, p. 37.) Butterworth lists sixty-nine attacks of illness (*Wesley Historical Society Proceedings* [see reference 83], XIV, 162ff.). In 1783 he was dangerously ill. (John S. Simon, *John Wesley, the Last Phase* [London: Epworth Press, 1934], pp. 205f.) He frequently alludes to his bodily infirmities, yet Woodrow Wilson declared that he came "out of the hands of his mother with the temper of a piece of fine steel" (*op. cit.*, p. 19), and Leslie Stephens characterized him as "a human game cock." See reference to his weight; to his strength in his seventy-second year; and to his remarkable vigor and endurance at eighty-five, *Journal*, VI, 29, 462.

21. John Wesley, *Journal*, I, 4. Wesley's *Diaries* are to be distinguished from the *Journal*. They constitute the sources from which Wesley constructed his *Journal*. In writing them Wesley used Byrom's shorthand, together with original signs and abbreviations, and forms of cipher writing intelligible only to himself. By painstaking study Curnock succeeded in deciphering all the cryptographic words and sentences in the extant *Diaries*. He used the *Diaries* in annotating his Standard Edition of the *Journal*.

22. *A Christian Library . . .*, John Wesley, Ed. (London: T. Cordeux, 1822), XV: *The Lives of Various Eminent Persons*, p. 4.

23. S. G. Dimond, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

24. Robert Southey, letter to William Wilberforce, Jan. 3, 1818, in William Wilberforce, *Correspondence* (Philadelphia: Henry Perkins, 1841), II, 211. The sentence as a whole reads: "I consider him as the most influential mind of the last century—the man who will have produced the greatest effects, centuries, or perhaps millenniums hence, if the present race of men should continue so long."

25. John Wesley, letter to Thomas Church, June 17, 1746, *Letters*, II, 269f. This is the second of two long letters to Thomas Church, headed "The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained."

26. John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 245. "Whether they embrace this religious opinion or that ['I speak of such opinions as do not touch the foundation'] is no more concern to me, than whether they embrace this or that system of astronomy." (*Ibid.*, p. 246.) John

Alfred Faulkner: "Of course Wesley was not a theologian in the sense of Calvin, Hodge, or William B. Pope; but he was a theologian in the sense of being interested in theological discussions, being at home in them, and of being deeply concerned in theological truth."—*Wesley as Sociologist, Theologian, Churchman* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1918), p. 38.

27. John Wesley, *Letters*, VI, 327. On the point that "orthodoxy, or right opinions, is, at best, but a very slender part of religion," see his *Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*, *Works*, VIII, 249.

28. John Wesley, *Journal*, II, 421n. Tyerman characterizes the sermon on "Free Grace" as "in some respects, . . . the most important sermon that . . . [Wesley] ever issued" (*op. cit.*, I, 317). It was not included within the four volumes that formed part of the doctrinal standard.

29. Cf. Elizabeth K. Nottingham, *Methodism and the Frontier* . . . (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 105. A doctoral thesis. Has valuable historical data; also significant for its independent point of view.

30. Elie Halévy, *A History of the English People in 1815* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1924), first published in French in 1912. "On two points—the growth of the characteristically English utilitarian philosophy, and the history of English religion from 1750 to 1850"—says Graham Wallas, in his Introduction to this edition, "he [Halévy] is not only a researcher, but the only researcher who has examined those subjects both with scientific thoroughness and with scientific detachment."

31. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 1.

32. John Wesley, *Works*, V, 53ff.

33. *Ibid.*, VI, 179ff.; Luke Tyerman, *Life of George Whitefield* (New York: Randolph, 1877), II, 618f.

34. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VI, 45, 74.

35. John Wesley, *Journal*, I, 151.

36. Cf. Wesley's three sermons on the "Witness of the Spirit," *Works*, V, 111ff. Also his statement: "It more nearly concerns the Methodists . . . clearly to understand, explain, and defend this doctrine; because it is one grand part of the testimony which God has given them to bear to all mankind. It is because of his peculiar blessing upon them in searching the Scriptures, confirmed by the experience of his children, that this great evangelical truth has been recovered, which had been for so many years well nigh lost and forgotten."—*Ibid.*, p. 124.

37. Herbert B. Workman, Principal of Westminster Training College, "The Place of Methodism in the Life and Thought of the Christian Church," in *A New History of Methodism*, W. G. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds., I, 21.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

39. Wellman J. Warner, *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1930), p. 67.

40. S. G. Dimond, *op. cit.*, pp. 240f.

41. John S. Simon, *John Wesley, the Master-BUILDER* (London: Epworth Press, 1927), pp. 49, 69. It is of interest, however, to note the impression that Wesley's character made upon those who knew him best. Alexander Knox, who knew him intimately, says of him: "the slightest suspicion of pride, ambition, selfishness, . . . or personal gratification of whatever kind . . . never once entered into my mind. . . . But my deep impression was, and it certainly remains unimpaired, that since the days of the Apostles there has not been a human being more thoroughly exempt from all those frailties of human nature than John Wesley."

For a general characterization of Wesley's character and personality see Joseph Benson, *The Methodist Magazine* (September, 1825), pp. 354ff. A quotation from the article is in J. S. Simon, *John Wesley, the Last Phase*, p. 38.

42. John Wesley, *Works*, VI, 45f., 53, 509; XI, 380, 387, 402, 446.

43. *Ibid.*, XI, 380, 383, 393, 442, 446; XII, 123; VI, 491.

44. *Ibid.*, VI, 416, par. 5, 6, 7; 420, par. 14; 489; XII, 220.

45. *Ibid.*, VI, 5, par. 9; X, 350; XI, 442; XII, 349.
46. *Ibid.*, XI, 426, 442.
47. *Ibid.*, XI, 367, par. 6; 368; 371f.; 384; 416.
48. *Ibid.*, VI, 413.
49. *Ibid.*, par. 4; VIII, 67; XI, 430, 444.
50. G. Eayrs, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
51. Maldwyn Edwards, *John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century* . . . (New York: Abingdon Press, 1933), pp. 180f.
52. John Wesley, *Letters*, I, 207; L. Tyerman, *Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, I, 133.
53. John Wesley, *Works*, XII, 198ff.; XIV, 332ff.; *Journal*, June 4, 1742, III, 17f. Of Jacob Behman (or Böhme), *Mysterium Magnum*, or *Exposition of Genesis*: "I can and must say . . . [of it that] it is most sublime nonsense, inimitable bombast, fustian not to be paralleled!"
54. John Wesley, *Works*, V, 32.
55. Arthur W. Nagler, *Pietism and Methodism* . . . (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1918), pp. 93ff., 101; H. B. Workman, *op. cit.*, I, 55ff.
56. John Wesley, *Letters*, II, 57. Cf. *Journal*, II, 274ff. Also, IV, 430. Wesley, strongly High Church in his youth, more and more deviated from the High Church position in doctrine. Cf. A. W. Nagler, *op. cit.*, pp. 108f.
57. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 54; M. Piette, *op. cit.*, pp. 258, 270.
58. H. N. McTyeire, *op. cit.*, pp. 214f.
59. For a statement of the Moravian point of view, see Daniel Benham, *Memoirs of James Hutton* . . . (London: Hamilton, Adams, 1856), pp. 47, 53ff., 112f.
60. John Wesley, *Journal*, II, 328ff.
61. *Ibid.*, II, 315f., and 316 note 1; 371.
62. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 312ff.
63. John Wesley, *Works*, VII, 374ff.; *Journal*, April 29, 1739: "I declared the free grace of God to about four thousand people . . .," II, 185.
64. John Wesley, *Works*, VII, 383.
65. John Wesley, *Journal*, II, 439.
66. T. G. Crippen, "Hymns, Modern Christian" in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, James Hastings, Ed. (New York: Scribners, 1915), VII, 34.
67. John Wesley, *Sacred Harmony*, Preface, quoted in Richard Green, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
68. S. G. Dimond, *op. cit.*, pp. 122f. John S. Simon, "Their music streamed along the humble pathways of common life. . . ."—*The Revival of Religion in England in the Eighteenth Century*, the Thirty-seventh Fernley Lecture (London: Robert Culley), pp. 302ff.
69. John Wesley, *An earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, *Works*, VIII, 3. See also VIII, 246.
70. S. G. Dimond, *op. cit.*, p. 85. John Wesley omitted Charles Wesley's great hymn, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul" from the 1780 edition of *Methodist Hymns* because of his objection to the amorous, mystical language of the opening lines.
71. W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, p. 290.
72. Harold U. Faulkner, *Chartism and the Churches, A Study in Democracy* (New York: 1916), p. 12. A doctoral thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University, fully documented. Dr. Faulkner, son of John Alfred Faulkner of Drew Theological Seminary, since 1931 professor of history in Smith College, Northampton, Mass.
73. John Wesley, *Works*, V, 296; Preface to *Poetical Works* (London: Wesleyan Methodism Conference Office, 1868), I, XIX. Cf. Paul B. Kern, ". . . withal, to Wesley salvation was social. Men were saved to become the centers of salvation."—*Methodism Has a Message* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1941), p. 93.
74. John Wesley, *Journal*, II, 198.
75. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 135.
76. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, IV, 427f.

77. *Ibid.*, V, 401.
78. *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1740, II, 333.
79. *Ibid.*, Nov. 3, 1740, II, 399.
80. *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1740, II, 403f.; Feb. 16, 1744, III, 116f.; Feb. 27, 1744, III, 122; March 22, 1744, III, 125.
81. William Myles, *Chronological History of the People Called Methodists* . . . (London: Thomas Cordeux, 1813), pp. 35f.
82. John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 267; *Journal*, July 17, 1746, III, 246; Jan. 17, 1748, III, 329; Jan. 11, 1767, V, 194; L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 550f.
83. *Wesley Historical Society, Proceedings of* (Printed for the Society, England, place of publication not indicated), as quoted in W. J. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 224. Following references to the Proceedings will be styled "W.H.S. Proceedings."
84. John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 264.
85. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 526.
86. Richard Watson, *Life of the Rev. John Wesley* . . . , a New Edition, with Notes (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), p. 188. Wesley himself does not mention any such course, but says, "I never properly studied . . . [anatomy and physic] unless for a few months when I was going to America. . . ."—*Works*, VIII, 264.
87. John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 263.
88. *W.H.S. Proceedings*, I, 58. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, 1748, I, 42; W. Myles, *op. cit.*, pp. 23f.
89. W. Myles, *op. cit.*, p. 180. Curnock states that the Society was "instituted in London in 1785 by John Gardner," in consultation with Wesley.—John Wesley, *Journal*, VIII, 49n.
90. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VIII, 49n.
91. Robert F. Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Epworth Press, 1945), p. 213. For account of work of the Society, see Adam Clarke, in *The Methodist Magazine* (London), XXI (August, 1798), 418ff.
92. W. E. H. Lecky, *op. cit.*, VII, 354.
93. John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 266.
94. John Wesley, *Journal*, VI, 129n. Charles Atmore, *The Methodist Memorial . . . Lives and Characters of the Preachers* . . . (Bristol: Richard Edwards, 1801), in his sketch of John Hampson, says, "He settled at Southborough . . . , where he . . . was . . . Master of a Charity-school." (p. 178). *W.H.S. Proceedings*, IV (1904), Part 5, 147, Notes and Queries 247, anon. contributor: "A former (early) possessor of my copy of Atmore's *Memorial* . . . annotates in pencil [opposite this paragraph] 'One of Mr. Wesley's 3 Kent schools.'"
95. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 79, 82.
96. *Instructions for Children* (London: M. Cooper, 1745). It was mainly a translation from the French of that by Abbé Fleury and M. Poiret concerning which Wesley wrote, "I have never seen anything comparable to them, either for depth of sense, or plainness of language." (*Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 43); John Wesley, *Journal*, IV, 157.
97. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, II, 534; J. S. Simon, *John Wesley, the Master-BUILDER*, p. 267.
98. John Wesley, *Letters*, V, 227; *Sermons, Works*, VII, 77.
99. John Wesley, *Sermons*, "On the Education of Children," *Works*, VII, 86ff.; *Journal*, V, 352f. On the influence of the writings of Rousseau, see Paul Monroe, *A Textbook in the History of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), pp. 550ff.
100. Cf. M. Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 133ff.; F. J. McConnell, *op. cit.*, p. 83; Herbert B. Workman, *Methodism* (New York: Putnam, 1912), p. 115.
101. W. J. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 217f.
102. John Wesley, *Works*, VI, 128f.
103. J. Ernest Rattenbury, *Wesley's Legacy to the World* (London: Epworth Press, 1928), p. 240; M. Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 190ff. Cf. J. A. Faulkner: "I do not find that

Wesley . . . had thought out what Christianity really demands, if radically carried out in the reconstruction of human relations." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 7ff.) Opposition of his preachers to social reform was in part an outgrowth of Wesley's Toryism, shared by many of his preachers, and his theory of the origin and nature of the civil power. For a significant discussion of this angle, see W. J. Warner, *op. cit.*, ch. IV, "Political Trends in the Wesleyan Movement."

104. J. H. Overton, *John Wesley* (London: Methuen, 1891), p. 120.

105. "Preamble to Wesley's General Rules," 1743, *Works*, VIII, 269f.

106. W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, p. 354; G. Eayrs in *A New History of Methodism*, W. G. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds., I, 285f.; F. J. McConnell, *op. cit.*, pp. 109ff.

107. John S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Religious Societies* (London: Epworth Press, 1921), pp. 10, 12, 23, 25, 324.

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 327ff. The Fetter Lane Society, formed on May 1, 1738, "has [sometimes] been called the first Methodist Society. . . ." (Joseph Benson, *An Apology for the Methodists* . . . [London: 1801], pp. 76f.) But in fact, though it was a Church of England Society (under strong Moravian influence), it cannot rightly be said to have been the first Methodist Society. See Wesley, *Journal*, I, 458 n.2. See also T. McCullagh, "The First Methodist Society, the Date and Place of Its Origin" in *W.H.S. Proceedings*, III, Part 6, 166ff.

109. Cf. W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, p. 354. H. B. Workman disagrees, calling attention to "the somewhat similar institutions in connexion with the Cistercians and the Friars," in *A New History of Methodism*, G. Eayrs, H. B. Workman, and W. G. Townsend, Eds., I, 43f.

110. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 1.

111. John Wesley, *Journal*, III, 143f., n.

112. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, Appendix, 710f.

113. W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, pp. 349ff.

114. "Deed of Declaration," executed Feb. 28, 1784, and enrolled in the Court of Chancery. "Connexion" was defined by Richard Watson as "a number of societies who have agreed to unite themselves in a common bond of doctrine and discipline, under a common code of regulations and usages, and under a common government."—*An Affectionate Address* . . . , pamphlet, dated Sept. 23, 1828, in *Works* (London: John Mason, 1835), VII, 90.

115. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 710.

116. John Wesley, *Letters*, III, 195; VII, 294.

117. E. Halévy, *op. cit.*, I, 368f.

118. R. Watson, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* . . . , pp. 158f.

119. Adam Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* (Fourth Ed. New York: Carlton and Lanahan), p. 412; L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 369.

120. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, I, 370.

121. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 61.

122. John Wesley, *Letters*, VIII, 196. Some years earlier (January, 1773) in appealing to John Fletcher to come to his assistance "while I am alive and capable of labour," Wesley had written in much the same vein: ". . . it is not good that the supreme power should be lodged in many hands: let there be one chief governor. [This sentence is written in Greek.] I see more and more, unless there be one person who presides over the rest [also written in Greek] the work can never be carried on. The body of the preachers are not united: nor will any part of them submit to the rest; so that either there must be one to preside over all, or the work will indeed come to an end."—Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (New York: Published for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 1825), II, 215.

123. E. K. Nottingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 125f.

124. Robert Southey, *Life of Wesley and Rise and Progress of Methodism*, II, 86. Contra: Julia Wedgewood, *John Wesley and the Evangelical Reaction of the Eighteenth*

Century (London: Macmillan, 1870), who argues that supreme position "had never been an object of ambition to Wesley."

125. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 61f.

126. W. Myles, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-454. Myles lists the names of 690 preachers, of whom he records 223 having "died in the work"; 23 having been expelled; and 263 having "departed from it: some for want of health, and some it is to be feared, through a defect of zeal. . . ."

127. Thomas P. Bunting, *Life of Jabez Bunting, D.D.* . . . (New York: Harpers, 1859), I, 330ff.

128. H. U. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, p. 85; R. F. Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Working-Class Movements of England, 1800-1850* (London: Epworth Press, 1937), p. 195.

129. A. Clarke, *op. cit.*, pp. 60f.

130. *Ibid.*, pp. 166ff.

131. *Ibid.*, p. 388; G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* (London: Epworth Press, 1921), I, 29.

132. George Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866), I, 118.

133. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 69.

134. Joseph Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev. John Wesley and His Friends, Illustrative of His Early History* . . . (Birmingham: 1791), p. 58.

I

COLONIAL PLANTING

1. Charles E. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America, 1628-1922* (New York: Board of Publication and Bible-School Work of the Reformed Church in America, 1922), pp. 7, 12.

2. John T. Christian, *A History of the Baptists in the United States from the first settlement of the country to 1845* (Nashville: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1926), ch. I; William Warren Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Scribners, 1942), pp. 127f.

3. Charles A. Briggs, *American Presbyterianism* (New York: Scribners, 1885), pp. 140ff., 143.

4. Leonard W. Bacon, *History of American Christianity* (New York: Scribners, 1901), p. 199.

5. Edward Channing, *A History of the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1937), II, 19f.

6. Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population before the Federal Census of 1790* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), pp. 6f. Estimates of population of cities differ widely. Joseph Pilmoor, who visited Savannah in February, 1773, says: "There are [in Savannah] about three thousand inhabitants white and black."—Ms. "Journal" typescript copy, p. 220. The original manuscript of the Pilmoor "Journal," which has never been published, is in possession of the Philadelphia Conference Historical Society, Philadelphia. A typescript copy has been made which reproduces "the phraseology, spelling, punctuation, and underscoring of the original." All references in this volume are to the typescript copy.

7. J. Franklin Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 28.

8. Evarts B. Greene, *The Revolutionary Generation, 1763-1790* (New York: Macmillan, 1943), p. 70. "No one before Professor Greene," we believe, say Arthur M. Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox, "has attempted so fully to synthesize the whole experience of the people [during the period from 1763-90]."

9. The Committee of the American Council of the Learned Societies on Linguistic and

National Stocks in the Population of the United States in 1790 reported in 1932 the following estimate: English, 60.1 per cent; Scotch, 8.1; Irish, 9.5; Dutch, 3.1; French, 2.3; Swedish, .7; Spanish, .8; Unassigned, 6.8.—*Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1931, I, 124.

10. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West* (New York: Putnam, 1900), I, 39f.

11. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 67; Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), pp. 74, 76; J. F. Jameson, *op. cit.*, pp. 21f.

12. George Croghan, as quoted by E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 176. Source not stated. For Croghan see Note 18 below.

13. T. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, I, 179f.; 215f.; James Alton James, *The Life of George Rogers Clark* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), pp. 8f.

14. John Fiske, *Old Virginia and Her Neighbors* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1900), II, 371f.; Charles A. Hanna, *The Scotch-Irish* (New York: Putnam, 1902), I, 621; Wayland F. Dunaway, *The Scotch-Irish of Colonial Pennsylvania* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), pp. 33ff.

15. Quoted by Stephen Vincent Benét, *America* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1944), p. 26.

16. Frederick J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, 1920), pp. 64ff.; J. Fiske, *op. cit.*, pp. 373f.; W. F. Dunaway, *op. cit.*, ch. VI; C. A. Hanna, *op. cit.*, II, chs. IV, V. The immigrants were chiefly from the agricultural districts of Ulster where Methodism had made many converts.—C. H. Crookshank, *History of Methodism in Ireland* (Belfast: B. S. Allen, Son and Allen, 1885), I, 278.

17. J. A. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 118f.; William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days Along the Ohio* (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1923), p. 18.

18. George Croghan's *Journal of His Trip to Detroit in 1767*, Howard H. Peckham, Ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1939), p. 5. George Croghan was an Irish Episcopal Indian trader whose courage, vision, and energy contributed much to the English penetration of the vast region west of the Alleghenies before the Revolution. Once when attacked he "got the Stroke of a hatchett on the Head, but," he says, "my Scull being pretty thick the hatchett wou'd not enter. . . ."; T. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, I, 124ff.

19. Vernon L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1930), I, *The Colonial Mind*, 181f.

20. Samuel Deane, *The Newengland Farmer; or, Georgical Dictionary . . .* (Second Ed. Worcester: 1797), p. 104. The author, a doctor of divinity, was vice president of Bowdoin College. "In some countries," he says, "men choose to hold large farms. But in places where labour is dear, as in this country, small farms are to be preferred."

21. Anon., *American Husbandry*, I, 90, quoted by E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

22. Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North America in the Years 1759 and 1760 . . .* (Third Ed. London: 1798), p. 118.

23. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 47f., 192f.

24. J. F. Jameson, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

25. T. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, I, 135ff. "For generations their whole ecclesiastic and scholastic systems had been fundamentally democratic" (p. 138). C. A. Briggs: "The Scotch-Irish on the frontiers of Virginia and North Carolina . . . were the first to advance to a declaration of independence. . . ." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 347ff.) For detailed and picturesque description of distinctive characteristics of the back-country settlements, see Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Founding of American Civilization, the Old South* (New York: Scribners, 1942), ch. IV, pp. 166ff.

26. Edwin G. Dexter, *History of Education in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), p. 52.

27. N. D. Mereness, *Maryland as a Proprietary Province* (New York: Macmillan, 1901), p. 141.

28. Quoted by W. E. H. Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, III, 316.
29. Charles Lee Smith, *History of Education in North Carolina*, Circular of Information, No. 2 (Washington: published by U. S. Bureau of Education, 1888), p. 23.
30. E. G. Dexter, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
31. Margaret T. Hodgen, *Workers' Education in England and the United States* (New York: Dutton, 1925), pp. 165f.
32. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
33. Thomas Jefferson, *Works* (New York: Putnam, 1904), I, 58.
34. Devereux Jarratt, *Life . . . Written by Himself in a Series of Letters Addressed to the Rev. John Coleman* (Baltimore: 1806), p. 14.
35. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
36. J. F. Jameson, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
37. Quoted by E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
38. Ernest S. Bates, *American Faith; Its Religious, Political, and Economic Foundations* (New York: Norton, 1940), pp. 250f.
39. Claude H. Van Tyne, *Causes of the War of Independence* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1922), p. 424. Cf. J. F. Jameson, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
40. See "Establishments in America," in W. W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, ch. II, "Transplanting Anglicanism," and pages 322ff. For restrictions on Roman Catholics in the colonies, see Sister Mary Augustine (Ray), *American Opinion of Roman Catholicism in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), chs. III-VII. Also see Sanford H. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), ch. IX. An excellent brief account is Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), I, 126ff.
41. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, ch. VII.
42. *Ibid.*, ch. VIII, sec. IV; Guy Soullard Klett, *Presbyterians in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1937), chs. III, IV, V; L. W. Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 186; R. A. Guild, *Chaplain Smith and the Baptists* (Philadelphia: 1885), p. 157n.
43. Edward Frank Humphrey, *Nationalism and Religion in America, 1774-1789* (Boston: Chipman Law Publishing Co., 1924), pp. 1-12; Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham, N. C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1929) chs. XI, XII; W. E. H. Lecky, *op. cit.*, III, 318. John Adams records that when the Continental Congress first met, Sept. 5, 1774, in Philadelphia Thomas Cushing moved that it should be opened with prayer. Objection was offered by Jay of New York and Rutledge of South Carolina "because we were so divided in religious sentiments, some Episcopalians, some Quakers, some Anabaptists, some Presbyterians, and some Congregationalists, that we could not join in the same act of worship." But Samuel Adams disagreed and the motion was passed. On Sept. 7, Mr. Duché, an Episcopal clergyman, used the Collect for the Day, reading several prayers and the thirty-fifth Psalm. Adams concludes: "I never saw a greater effect upon an audience. It seemed as if Heaven had ordained that Psalm to be read on that morning."—*Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail Adams . . .*, Charles Francis Adams, Ed. (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1876), p. 37.
44. J. S. Clark, *A Historical Sketch of the Congregational Churches in Massachusetts from 1620 to 1858* (Boston: 1858), p. 193.
45. C. A. Briggs, *op. cit.*, pp. 342f.
46. Timothy Walker, *Diaries, Collections*, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, IX, 123-191. Walker (1705-82), graduate of Harvard College, settled as pastor in 1730 at Pennycook, now Concord, N. H., where he remained for fifty-two years. His *Diaries*, consisting of brief, succinct notations of his activities, present an interesting contrast to the *Journal* of Francis Asbury.

47. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 114; Arthur W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family* . . . (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1945), I, pp. 133f.
48. Cf. letter of Thomas Bell to John Wesley, *Arminian Magazine*, reprinted by J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism* (New York: Wilbur B. Ketcham, 1889), pp. 113f. The Brick Presbyterian Church had been opened for worship in January, 1768.
49. C. E. Corwin, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
50. Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Founding of American Civilization, the Middle Colonies* (New York: Scribners, 1938), pp. 91f.
51. Cornelius Van Schie, of Poughkeepsie, letter, May 7, 1732, to the Rev. L. Beels, Amsterdam, in *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York* (Albany: 1902), IV, 2,590.
52. Edmund A. De Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1870), ch. V, *et seq.*
53. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 244.
54. Quoted by T. J. Wertenbaker, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
55. Irving S. Kull, Ed., *New Jersey, A History* (New York: American Historical Society, Inc., 1930), I, 59.
56. T. J. Wertenbaker, *op. cit.*, pp. 171ff., 178ff.
57. Quoted in Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 525.
58. Francois Jean Chastellux, Marquis de, *Travels in North America* (Dublin: 1787), I, 314f., 333f.; T. J. Wertenbaker, *op. cit.*, pp. 200ff.
59. Devereux Jarratt, *A Brief Narrative of the Revival of Religion in Virginia. In a Letter to a Friend [Thomas Rankin]* (Third Ed. London: J. Paramore, 1776), p. 3. The Narrative appears in Nathan Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Third Ed. New York: Mason and Lane, 1839), I, 90ff. Also in Francis Asbury's *Journal* (New York: Lane and Scott, 1852), I, 208ff. A copy of the pamphlet is in the Union Theological Library, New York.
60. Quoted in Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1930), pp. 36f., from Dawson Mss., Sept. 8, 1759.
61. Anthony Gavin, letter, Aug. 5, 1738, to the Bishop of London, quoted in *American Memory* . . . , Henry Beston, Ed. (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1937), p. 95; William Stevens Perry, Ed., *Papers relating to the History of the Church in Virginia, A.D. 1650-1776* (Privately printed, 1870), pp. 360f.
62. William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1887), I, 448f. Of McRoberts, William Watters wrote: "He was the first Minister of the church of England that ever I heard preach Christian experience." (*A Short Account of the Christian Experience, and Ministerial Labours, of William Watters* [Alexandria: S. Snowden, 1806], p. 58.) On Jarratt's fellowship with McRoberts see the autobiography, *The Life of the Rev. Devereux Jarratt*, pp. 100f.
63. William Wilson Manross, *History of the American Episcopal Church* (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1935), pp. 58f. See also Alexander Forbes, letter to the Bishop of London, dated July 21, 1724; and "A Proposition [to the General Assembly of Virginia] For Supplying the country of Virginia with a sufficient number of much better clergymen than have usually come into it . . . , " reprinted in W. S. Perry, Ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 331ff., 342. Also pp. 30, 130, 259, 347.
64. Quoted by A. W. Harrison, *The Evangelical Revival and Christian Reunion*, p. 143.
65. W. M. Gewehr, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Cf. D. Jarratt, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 51, 55ff.
66. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
67. Herbert M. Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), ch. III; S. G. Dimond, *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival*, p. 237f.; George G. Findlay, "Methodist Doctrine," in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, James Hastings, Ed., VIII, 610.

68. H. M. Morais, *op. cit.*, ch. IV; E. S. Bates, *op. cit.*, p. 226; E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

69. L. W. Bacon, *op. cit.*, pp. 198f.

70. William Crook, *Ireland and the Centenary of American Methodism* (London: Hamilton, Adams, 1866), pp. 103ff. Concerning Thomas Taylor virtually nothing is known other than what his letter to Wesley reveals.

71. John Wesley, *Journal*, V, 282n.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 290.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 331.

74. Holland N. McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, pp. 253ff. C. A. Briggs contends that "Methodism in America" (using the term evidently as synonymous with evangelism, rather than as an organized Church) began in the Dutch Reformed Church as the result of the work of Jacob Frelinghuysen in New Jersey (1720-47); that it was further developed by Gilbert Tennent; and still further advanced by the great evangelistic movement under Whitefield; and that this Calvinistic Methodism "produced two great theologians, Jacob Dickinson, and Jonathan Edwards . . . [the latter] the father of modern British and American theology . . . [particularly] in those characteristic doctrines of the Methodist movement which he so successfully formulated and explained. . . ."—*Op. cit.*, pp. 238ff., 260ff.

75. Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States . . . 1766-1809* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), pp. 24f.

76. *Minutes of the Annual Conferences . . .* (New York: Published for the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Conference Office, 1840), I, 27. From this point on these will be referred to as "Gen'l Minutes." Ezekiel Cooper, *The Substance of a Funeral Address . . .* (Philadelphia: Jonathan Pounder, 1819), pp. 72f.

77. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 23f.

78. Some of the more important statements setting forth the Maryland view are: William Hamilton, *Methodist Quarterly Review*, XXXVIII (July, 1856), 431ff.; Frank G. Porter, *The Methodist Review*, CXI (May, 1928), 371ff.; Edward L. Watson, *The Methodist Review*, CXII (May, 1929), 409ff. Contra: J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, chs. II, III, V, XIII, XVII, XVIII, XIX; Lewis R. Streeter, *The Methodist Review*, CXII (January, 1929), 87f.

79. *A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America Considered and Approved at a Conference held at Baltimore . . . 27th of December, 1784, in which the Reverend Thomas Coke, L.L.D. and the Reverend Francis Asbury, presided.* (New York: W. Ross, 1787.) This *Discipline* was prepared by Asbury and Coke preceding the Christmas Conference, and "considered and approved" by the preachers present. It thus constitutes a case, as Wakeley suggests (*op. cit.*, pp. 164ff.) of "Asbury against Asbury," the editor vs. the diarist. The *Disciplinary* statement was continued unchanged by Asbury in every edition till his death in 1816.

80. Samuel A. Seaman, *Annals of New York Methodism . . .* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1892), p. 14.

81. W. Crook, *op. cit.*, pp. 73f. John Atkinson supplies the names of twenty-five of the emigrants, and says there "were probably others. Several . . . had families."—*Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America . . .* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1896), p. 47.

82. For a detailed account of the Palatinate migration see Walter A. Knittle, *Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Emigration* (Philadelphia: L. Dorrance, 1937), particularly pp. 1ff., 72ff., 86, 88, 127ff.; ch. VIII.

83. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, IV, 168f.

84. W. Crook, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

85. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 47f. Bangs infers that Philip Embury was a member of the card-playing group, but of this there is no evidence. Cf. W. Crook, *op. cit.*, pp. 89f.

86. For a more detailed account of the life and character of Philip Embury, see Wil-

liam Warren Sweet, *Men of Zeal* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1935), pp. 53ff. That Philip Embury and his wife, within a few months after arrival in New York, became communicant members of Trinity Lutheran Church, of which Barbara Heck already was a member, is established by original church records. See Ruthella M. Bibbins, *How Methodism Came . . .* (Baltimore: American Methodist Historical Society, 1945), pp. 92ff.

87. J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 46f.
88. Samuel Drew, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke* (New York: Soule and Mason, 1818), pp. 48f.
89. J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
90. S. A. Seaman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
92. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 207f.
93. Francis H. Tees, *The Story of Old St. George's . . .* (Philadelphia: Message Publishing Co., 1941), p. 19; James M. Buckley, *A History of Methodism in the United States* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1897), I, 136.
94. John Lednum, *A History of the Rise of Methodism in America . . .* (Philadelphia: J. Van Court, 1859), pp. 45ff.
95. John J. Tigert, *A Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism* (Second Ed. Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1904), p. 52.
96. John Wesley, *Letters*, VI, 20. For summary of life of Thomas Webb, see Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .*, I, 57ff. Stevens declares Webb to have been, "aside from the mere question of priority, the principal founder of the American Methodist Church"—an overstatement. See also W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1861), VII, 5ff.; J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, chs., IV, XVI.
97. C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* (London: Published by the Society, 1901), pp. 4ff., 63, 86f.; W. W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, pp. 57ff.
98. C. F. Pascoe, *op. cit.*, p. 62; W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
99. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 91.
100. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VI, 22f.
101. *Ibid.*, V, 183f.
102. J. Pilmoor, ms. "Journal," p. 5.
103. John S. Simon, *John Wesley, the Master-Builder*, pp. 260f. See also his statement in *The Revival of Religion in England in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 273.
104. J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, p. 2; A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, I, 93f.
105. W. H. Fitchett, *Wesley and His Century . . .*, p. 264.
106. J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Pilmoor says that he and Boardman "landed at Gloucester Point" on "the twenty-first of October." John Lednum (*op. cit.*, p. 63) says it was October 24. This is the more probable date.
107. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 212; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 59.
108. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
109. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 16, 17.
110. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 39f. C. C. Goss, in his *Statistical History of the First Century of American Methodism* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1866), says: "Boardman preached and formed a class in Boston," p. 40. Returning from his Nova Scotia Mission in 1787 Freeborn Garrettson preached in Boston. He records finding there three Methodists who credited their Methodist interest to Boardman's visit.
111. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 5.
112. J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
113. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 39f.; J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, pp. 155ff., 199, 215, 219, 220, 222ff.
114. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 80. Pilmoor's name, as that of Boardman, for some inexplicable reason does not appear in the list of appointments of the first Conference.

John Atkinson, in *The Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America*, pp. 417ff., defends Pilmoor's strategy for not scattering his efforts and in laboring for the in-trenchment of Methodism in New York and Philadelphia.

115. J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, pp. 258f.
116. J. B. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 217, 218. A good characterization of the character, personality, and work of Pilmoor is "The Life and Ministry of the Rev. Joseph Pilmore, D.D.," Frank Bateman Stranger, a S.T.D. thesis, Temple University School of Theology. The ms. is in Sullivan Memorial Library, Temple University, Philadelphia.
117. John Wesley, *Journal*, V, 315f.
118. C. H. Crookshank, *op. cit.*, I, 225.
119. W. Crook, *op. cit.*, ch. VII.
120. C. H. Crookshank, *op. cit.*, I, 225.
121. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 91.
122. First John Street Record Book Treasurers' Accounts, 1768-96 (ms. record), pp. 8ff. This is the original record referred to by J. B. Wakeley (*op. cit.*) as the "Old Book." It is in possession of the Methodist Historical Society in the City of New York.
123. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 17.
124. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 28, 36, 37.
125. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
126. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
127. W. W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia* (Richmond: published by the author, 1871), pp. 51f.
128. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 24ff.; M. H. Moore, *Sketches of the Pioncers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), pp. 48f.
129. Gressett Davis, letter to John Wesley, quoted by W. W. Bennett, *op. cit.*, pp. 56ff.
130. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 42f.
131. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
132. D. Jarratt, *Life . . .*, pp. 107ff.
133. D. Jarratt, *A Brief Narrative . . .*, p. 6.
134. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 5.
135. Cf. D. Jarratt, *Life . . .*, pp. 109ff.; W. M. Gewehr, *op. cit.*, pp. 143ff.; William Warren Sweet, *Methodism in American History* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1933), pp. 72ff.
136. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 6.
137. *Ibid.*, I, 7; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, April 28, 1775, "I met with brother W[il-liams] from Virginia; who gave me a great account of the work of God in those parts—five or six hundred souls justified by faith, and five or six circuits formed: so that we have now fourteen circuits in America . . .," I, 149.
138. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
139. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 40f.
140. *Ibid.*, pp. 45f.
141. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
142. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
143. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
144. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 5.
145. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 89; W. M. Gewehr: "In his brief ministry he had planted Methodism permanently in Virginia," *op. cit.*, p. 145. M. H. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 50f.
146. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 162.
147. *Ibid.*, I, 162f.
148. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
149. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
150. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 91.
151. J. Pilmoor, *op. cit.*, pp. 50, 51, 52; M. H. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 51ff.; Edward Hill

Davis, art., "John King: Pioneer, Physician, Preacher, Patriot," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, LXXVII (1928), 1 (July), 436ff.

152. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 5, 8.
153. M. H. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 54ff.; H. N. McTyeire, *op. cit.*, pp. 268ff.
154. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 214.
155. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 133; Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 49, 51.
156. W. P. Strickland, *The Pioneer Bishop* . . . (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1858), pp. 28f.
157. Herbert Asbury, *A Methodist Saint, the Life of Bishop Asbury* (New York: Knopf, 1927), pp. 1ff.
158. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 77.
159. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 226.
160. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 158ff.
161. *Ibid.*, I, 11; *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 75, 98.
162. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 12.
163. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
164. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
165. *Ibid.*
166. *Ibid.*
167. *Ibid.*
168. *Ibid.*, pp. 26ff.
169. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
170. *Ibid.*, pp. 45f.
171. L. W. Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
172. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 5.
173. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 108. For a discussion of the title "General Assistant"; also "Assistant" and "Helper," see N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 74.
174. Thomas Rankin, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Rankin written by himself*, in *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, Thomas Jackson, Ed. (London: John Mason, 1838), III, 59.
175. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 81.
176. *Ibid.*, pp. 82f. It is to be noted that Asbury's statement of "the propositions . . . agreed to" at the first Annual Conference (*Ibid.*, p. 80) differs from "the rules . . . agreed to" as recorded in the *Gen'l Minutes* (I, 5). The third proposition, as stated by Asbury, reads "No preacher in our connexion shall be permitted to administer the ordinances at this time; except Mr. S[trawbridge], and he under the particular direction of the assistant." Tradition asserts that Strawbridge had been ordained by a German Reformed minister in Baltimore.—J. E. Armstrong, *The Old Baltimore Conference* (Baltimore: 1907), p. 53.
177. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 7.
178. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, I, 72ff.
179. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 431.
180. H. N. McTyeire, *op. cit.*, pp. 270ff.; A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, I, 76ff.; William Warren Sweet: "Strawbridge was ahead of his time, and he may well be called 'the first real American Methodist leader.'"—*Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 36.
181. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 112.
182. *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 127, 128, 133, 134.
183. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
184. John Wesley, *Letters*, VI, 142.
185. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 145.
186. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VI, 147f.
187. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
188. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 143, 145, 146.
189. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

190. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 120; in his *Journal* Rankin makes no mention of his departure from America. The final entry relating to his American ministry is under date of Sunday, Dec. 1, 1777: "I preached at New-Mills to one of the . . . largest congregations that I ever saw in that place. . . ." (Thomas Jackson, Ed., *op. cit.*, III, 79.) It had been his purpose to spend some time in New York, but, he adds, "the noise and tumult occasioned by the British army marching through this province, and the American army retiring before them, threw everything into confusion, and made it unsafe for me to travel."

191. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 75, 82; George Shadford, *Life of Mr. George Shadford, written by himself*, in Thomas Jackson, Ed., *op. cit.*, III, 200.

192. George Shadford, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

193. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 113.

194. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 6; *Dictionary of American Biography*, Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, Eds. (New York: Scribners, 1930), V, 233.

195. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 7.

196. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, I, 99.

197. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 121.

198. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 8.

199. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VI, 142.

200. W. E. H. Lecky, *op. cit.*, III, 479.

201. W. Meade, *op. cit.*, I, 17.

202. Joseph H. Allen, in an address on the religious situation in the American Colonies before the Revolution (Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts [Boston: 1900], III, 42), stated that Governor Hutchinson believed that the Congregationalists, with their clergy, "in general aimed openly at independence; while the smaller religious bodies—Baptists, Methodist, Presbyterians, Quakers—might be reckoned neutral."

203. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 120f. In Delaware Chancy Clowe, a Methodist layman, convicted of aiding the British, was executed.—J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

204. Quoted by W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

205. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VI, 160ff.

206. M. Edwards, *John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century . . .*, p. 75. See also William Warren Sweet, art., "John Wesley: Tory," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, LXXI (1922), 2 (April), 255-268.

207. Romans 13.1.

208. Nathan Bangs, *The Life of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson . . .* (New York: Mason and Lane, 1838), pp. 57f. W. M. Gewehr: ". . . many of the Methodists, both preachers and laymen, were conscientious objectors and refused to fight when drafted." (*Op. cit.*, p. 158.) Thomas Chew, a layman, living near Carpenter's Landing, N. J., was a conscientious objector. On this ground an attempt was made to confiscate his estate, but when brought before a panel of judges he outwitted them and was discharged.—J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 53; see also p. 323.

209. Leroy M. Lee, *Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1860), pp. 88ff.

210. N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 127, 142; J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, pp. 214, 223, 231; E. Cooper, *The Substance of a Funeral Address . . .*, p. 80.

211. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 125f.; J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 214; W. W. Sweet, *Men of Zeal*, pp. 130f.

212. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 272, 187.

213. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 8ff.; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 268ff., III, 340; also, letter to Zachariah Myles, Aug. 16, 1804, in the Drew University Library collection. A question remains whether Asbury ever became a citizen of the United States. See William L. Duren, *Francis Asbury, Founder of American Methodism and Unofficial Minister of State* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), pp. 193ff.

214. Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware* (New York: Lane and Sandford, 1842), pp. 29f. This autobiography was pronounced by Abel Stevens to be "the best written book in our numerous catalogue of similar works."

215. *Journal of the House of Delegates [of Virginia]*, Oct. 28, 1776 (Richmond: 1828), p. 30; Hamilton J. Eckenrode, Archivist, *Separation of Church and State in Virginia . . .* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1910), p. 47; W. M. Gewehr, *op. cit.*, pp. 204f.

216. H. J. Eckenrode, *op. cit.*, p. 111; W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 143f.

217. W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, pp. 9f.

218. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 460.

219. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

220. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 49f.

221. John Atkinson, *Memorials of Methodism in New Jersey* (Philadelphia: Perkinpine and Higgins, 1860), pp. 406f.

222. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 11.

223. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 56f.

224. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 25, A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, 211.

225. T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

226. J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

227. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

228. T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

229. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 80f.

230. T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

231. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 45ff.; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 78ff.; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, ch. VI.

232. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 112; T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

233. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 6.

234. T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 70.

235. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 52; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 153; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 7.

236. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 184.

237. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 7.

238. N. Bangs, *The Life of Freeborn Garrettson*, p. 46.

239. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

240. *Ibid.*, Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 243f.

241. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

242. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 8.

243. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 244.

244. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

245. *Ibid.*

246. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 9.

247. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, pp. 284f.

248. Timothy Dwight, quoted in R. J. Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition, 1775-1818* (Washington: 1918), p. 9.

249. W. M. Gewehr, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

250. D. Jarratt, *A Brief Narrative . . .*, pp. 5ff. Sentences in Jesse Lee's account (*A Short History . . .*, pp. 54ff.) identical with this statement, were evidently quoted without credit from Jarratt's letter.

251. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 53. T. Rankin, letter to Wesley, June 24, 1778, included in pamphlet, D. Jarratt, *loc. cit.*, pp. 27ff.

252. T. Rankin, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

253. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

254. Ola Elizabeth Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758, A Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), chs. VIII, IX.

255. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

256. D. Jarratt, *op. cit.*, p. 12; Jesse Lee repeats Jarratt's statement verbatim, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
257. D. Jarratt, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 26.
258. W. M. Gewehr, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
259. D. Jarratt, *Life . . .*, p. 86.
260. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 242. Jarratt declared the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church to be an expression of "palpable insincerity to Christianity." (*Life . . .*, pp. 157ff.) See, however, quotations from two letters to Edward Dromgoole, in W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, pp. 22f.
261. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 68f.
262. *Ibid.*, pp. 71f.
263. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
264. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
265. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 309.
266. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 10.
267. *Ibid.*
268. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 69.
269. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
270. J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 104ff.; Philip Gatch, "Journal," in John M'Lean, *Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1854), p. 67.
271. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
272. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
273. *Ibid.*
274. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 313.
275. *Ibid.*, pp. 317, 337.
276. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 11ff.
277. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 79f.
278. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 366f.
279. W. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
280. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 367.
281. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 73f.
282. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 369.
283. *Ibid.*, p. 410.
284. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 74; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 138.
285. Freeborn Garrettson, "Semi-centennial Sermon," quoted by J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
286. H. J. Eckenrode, *The Revolution in Virginia* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1916), pp. 211ff., 214f., 221, 229.
287. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
288. *Ibid.*, pp. 78f.
289. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 444f.
290. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 80f.
291. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 458.
292. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 82; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 17ff.
293. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 84f.
294. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
295. Asbury's letter to Wesley, quoted by J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, p. 172. Four months earlier Edward Dromgoole had written Wesley much to the same effect. "The preachers at present are united to Mr. Asbury, and esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake; and earnestly desire his continuance on the continent during his natural life, and to act as he does at present, viz. to superintend the whole work, and go through all the circuits once a year."—Letter in *The Methodist Magazine*, II (September, 1798), 430.
296. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 19ff.
297. The exact number as reported at April-May 1784, Conference was 14,988.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 20.

298. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 240.
299. J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, p. 417.
300. S. A. Seaman, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
301. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 20.

II

ROOTS IN AMERICAN SOIL, 1784-1819

1. W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, III, 299f.
2. John Allen Krout and Dixon Ryan Fox, *The Completion of Independence, 1790-1830* (New York: Macmillan, 1944), p. 7.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 15f.
4. E. K. Nottingham, *Methodism and the Frontier—Indiana Proving Ground*, p. 32; J. A. Krout and D. R. Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 284; William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days Along the Ohio*, p. 20.
5. Jedidiah Morse, *American Universal Geography* (Boston: 1812), I, 368; Alexander C. Flick, *History of the State of New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933-37), V, 165f.
6. Frederick J. Turner, *Rise of the New West, 1819-1829*, pp. 80f.; for description in detail of the four principal routes to the West see J. M. Miller, *The Genesis of Western Culture, The Upper Ohio Valley, 1800-25*, Ohio Historical Collections, IX (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1938), 13ff.
7. The U. S. Department of State, *Statistical View of the Population of the United States from 1790 to 1830* (Washington: 1835), pp. 5, 86.
8. Stephen Vincent Benét, *America*, pp. 62f.
9. Lois K. Mathews, *The Expansion of New England . . .* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1909), pp. 259f.
10. Morris Birkbeck, *Notes on a Journey in America . . .* (Dublin: 1818), pp. 35f.; Rufus Babcock, Ed., *Memoir of John Mason Peck . . .* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1864), p. 146.
11. Thomas Jefferson, "Inaugural Address," 1801, in *Works*, IX, 196.
12. Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration . . .* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. 90.
13. J. A. Krout and D. R. Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 406.
14. Evarts B. Greene, *The Revolutionary Generation*, pp. 338ff.
15. George L. Walker, *Some Aspects of the Religious Life of New England. . . . Lectures delivered on the Carew Foundation before Hartford Theological Seminary in 1896*, p. 157.
16. Davis W. Clark, *Life and Times of Rev. Elijah Hedding . . .* (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855), p. 203.
17. Samuel G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime . . .* (New York: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan, 1856), I, 78ff.
18. G. L. Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 75ff.
19. Timothy Dwight, *Travels* (New Haven: T. Dwight, 1821-22), II, 459; William Warren Sweet, *Methodism in American History*, p. 15.
20. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York: Dutton, Everyman's Library), letter II, pp. 21f.
21. William Colbert, "A Journal of the Travels of the Rev. William Colbert," typed ms. I, 145f. Copy is in Garrett Biblical Institute Library, Evanston, Ill.
22. Thomas Cooper, *Some Information Respecting America* (Dublin: 1794), pp. 105f.
23. Thomas Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Late Rev. Thomas Coke . . .* (Dublin: R. Napper, 1816), pp. 128f.

24. Francis Asbury, *Journal*, Feb. 26, 1784, I, 470; April 11, I, 472; Nov. 26, 1787, II, 22; Feb. 1, 1790, II, 72; Feb. 24, 1790, II, 74.
25. William McKendree, "Journal," quoted by Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William McKendree* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1874), p. 117.
26. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
27. Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1944), p. 83.
28. Peter Cartwright, *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher*, W. P. Strickland, Ed. (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1856), p. 24.
29. Jacob Young, *Autobiography of a Pioneer . . .* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1857), pp. 111f.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
31. P. Cartwright, *op. cit.*, pp. 90ff. For a description of rowdiness in the Republic of Texas see Macum Phelan, *A History of Early Methodism in Texas* (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1924), pp. 98f.
32. Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware*, p. 133.
33. Henry Smith, *Recollections and Reflections of an Old Itinerant*, a series of letters (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1854), p. 13.
34. J. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 145; Maxwell P. Gaddis, *Brief Recollections of the late Rev. George W. Walker . . .* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1857), pp. 191f.
35. Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .*, III, 467.
36. I. F. King, "Introduction of Methodism in Ohio," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Publications (Columbus: Published for the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society), X (1902), 177. Trails through the forests were marked, other than by breaking off small branches, by cleaving the bark of trees in patches as large as a hand. These were called "blazes."
37. Charles Elliott, *The Life of the Rev. Robert R. Roberts . . .* (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1844), pp. 138f.
38. James B. Finley, *Autobiography, or Pioneer Life in the West*, W. P. Strickland, Ed. (Cincinnati: Printed at the Methodist Book Concern for the author, 1872), p. 248; P. Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
39. Alice M. Earle, *Stage-coach and Tavern Days . . .* (New York: Macmillan, 1900), pp. 243ff.
40. G. R. Taylor, art., "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi Valley preceding the War of 1812," *Journal of Political Economy*, XXXIX (No. 4, August, 1931), pp. 471ff.
41. John Stewart, *Highways and Hedges, or Fifty Years of Western Methodism* (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1872), pp. 35f. For a description of a typical frontier cabin, see I. F. King, *op. cit.*, X, 175f.
42. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 475; II, 36f.; 148; III, 132-33; R. Babcock, Ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 101ff., 132, 144ff.
43. W. Colbert, *op. cit.*, I, 89.
44. J. A. Krout and D. R. Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
45. John F. Wright, *Sketches of the Life and Labors of James Quinn . . .* (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1851), p. 31. For description of punishment at a public whipping-post in Ohio as late as 1826, see J. Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 144f.
46. John Mason Peck, *Father Clark, or the Pioneer Preacher, Sketches and Incidents of Rev. John Clark* (New York: Sheldon, Lamport, and Blakeman, 1855), ch. IX. Description of a school taught in 1796 near Crab Orchard, Lincoln County, Ky., by John Clark.
47. J. M. Peck, *op. cit.*, pp. 149, 207ff.; A. H. Redford, *History of Methodism in Kentucky* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1868-70), I, 19f.
48. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
49. P. Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
50. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 191.

51. William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religions in America* (New York: Harpers, 1930), p. 304.
52. John Wesley, *Letters*, VII, 239.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Robert F. Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 116; F. J. McConnell, *John Wesley*, pp. 186f. But consider that he "calls the United Societies a Church . . . [and] made careful arrangements for their ecclesiastical organization."—John S. Simon, *The Revival of Religion in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 309f.
55. F. J. McConnell, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
56. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VII, 30f.; *Idem, Works*, XIII, 117f.
57. John Wesley, *Works*, XIII, 194.
58. John J. Tigert, *A Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism*, pp. 167ff.; Samuel Drew, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke . . .*, p. 64.
59. Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley . . .*, II, 273; S. Drew, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 276f.
61. John Wesley, *Journal*, V, 507n. Wesley first met James Creighton in Swanlinbar, Ireland, where he later joined the Methodist Society. In 1783 Wesley invited him to London where for many years "he served at City Road and West Street as an ordained minister of the Church of England and a minister in the London Circuit."
62. William Phoebus, Ed., *Memoirs of the Rev. Richard Whatcoat . . .* (New York: Joseph Allen, 1828), pp. 17f.; H. Moore, *op. cit.*, II, 273f.; John Emory, *A Defence of "Our Fathers," and of the original Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1827), Sec. V, pp. 32ff. Luke Tyerman contends that Coke forced Wesley's hand in the matter of his ordination: "he was dangerously ambitious, and . . . the height of his ambition was a desire to be a bishop. . . ."—*Life and Times of Wesley*, III, 433.
63. John Wesley, *Works*, XIII, 216. That Wesley's action was not precipitate nor, having been taken, was later regretted, is evidenced by the statement he inserted in the (British) *Conference Minutes of 1786*: "Judging this to be a case of real necessity, I took a step which, for peace and quietness, I had refrained from taking for many years: I exercised that power which I am fully persuaded the great Shepherd and Bishop of the Church has given me. . . ."
64. John Wesley, *Letters*, VII, 284.
65. Alexander Knox, letter, in Robert Southey, *The Life of Wesley*, II, 358ff., 365. W. H. Fitchett: "But this explanation proves, for the High Church critics who quote it, quite too much. . . . [For] the famous Korah sermon . . . a mine of delightful quotations for the sacerdotal critics of Methodism, was preached . . . five years later, and must, on Alexander Knox's logic, represent, still more completely . . . the decay of Wesley's reasoning faculty."—*Op. cit.*, p. 418.
66. John Wesley, *op. cit.*, VII, 262.
67. *Ibid.*, V, 303.
68. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 484; cf. J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 183f.
69. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 486f.
70. Jesse Lee, *A Short History . . .*, pp. 94f. Asbury, Lee, and Whatcoat do not agree on the number elected and ordained as elders. Whatcoat in his *Journal* supplies a brief but somewhat more detailed day-by-day account of proceedings. See W. Phoebus, *op. cit.*, pp. 21ff.
71. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 105.
72. Thomas Haskins, "Journal," ms. Photostat in Westminster Theological Seminary Library.
73. William Warren Sweet, *Men of Zeal*, pp. 150f.
74. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 53ff., 74. Asbury mentions Coke's presence at the Annual Conferences in North Carolina, April 19-24; in Brunswick County, Va., on April 30;

- and in Baltimore on June 1, 1785.—*Journal*, I, 494, 495, 496; Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
75. Francis Asbury, "Certificate of Ordination of William McKendree," in R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 193f.; W. W. Sweet, *Methodism in American History*, p. 187.
76. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 511; II, 164; III, 459.
77. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, pp. 263, 189.
78. Leroy M. Lee, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee*, pp. 216ff., 250.
79. Quoted by James B. Finley, *Sketches of Western Methodism* . . . (Cincinnati: Printed at the Methodist Book Concern for the author, 1857), p. 169.
80. *Journal of the Ohio Conference*, 1805, in William Warren Sweet, *The Rise of Methodism in the West* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1920), pp. 107, 109.
81. D. W. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
82. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, p. 62; G. A. Raybold, *Reminiscences of Methodism in West Jersey* (New York: Lane and Scott, 1849), p. 13.
83. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
84. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 230, 275; Joseph Travis, *Autobiography of the Rev. Joseph Travis, A.M.* . . . , Thomas O. Summers, Ed. (Nashville: Stevenson and Evans, 1856), p. 59; *The Methodist Magazine*, III (August, 1820), 315f.
85. Nathan Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions* . . . (New York: Emory and Waugh, 1832), p. 25.
86. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
87. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 49f.; Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 137; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 436.
88. Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, IV, *The Great Century* . . . (New York: Harpers, 1941), 176.
89. Charles C. Tiffany, *A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*, The American Church History Series, VII (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1895), 394.
90. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in U.S.A.* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847), p. 152; Oliver W. Elsabee, *The Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America* (Williamsport, Pa., Williamsport Printing and Binding Co., 1928), p. 87.
91. Daniel Dorchester, *The Problem of Religious Progress* (Revised Ed. New York: Eaton and Mains, 1895), pp. 676, 694; W. W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, pp. 271f., 344ff.
92. E. B. Greene, *op. cit.*, pp. 282ff., 285ff.
93. Cf. F. J. McConnell, *op. cit.*, p. 186: "Coke had, more than any other early Methodist, a true missionary spirit." Also *A New History of Methodism*, W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and George Eayrs, Eds., I, 70f.
94. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 152f.
95. John Wesley, *Journal*, VI, 119f., 169.
96. W. H. Fitchett, *op. cit.*, p. 395.
97. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 40.
98. L. Tyerman, *op. cit.*, III, 418ff.; G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 64.
99. A facsimile copy of the original document appears in G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, II, 14ff.
100. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 38ff.
101. *Ibid.*, pp. 48ff.
102. Jonathan Crowther, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D.* (Leeds: Edward Baines, 1815), p. 199.
103. Thomas Coke, *An Address to the Pious and Benevolent proposing an Annual Subscription for the Support of Missionaries*, Pamphlet (London: 1786).
104. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, p. 148; J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
105. T. Coke, *Extracts of the Journals* . . . , p. 93.
106. J. W. Etheridge, *Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke*, p. 171.

107. N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 256.
108. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 26.
109. J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 190f.
110. *Ibid.*, pp. 197f.
111. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 127f.
112. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 47ff.
113. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
114. J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
115. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 111.
116. J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
117. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 115.
118. Quoted by J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
119. J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, p. 229.
120. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, pp. 261, 264ff.
121. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, IV, 76.
122. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 218ff.
123. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, III, 338.
124. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 319.
125. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, pp. 277f.
126. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 55f.
127. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 235, 246; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 359; Thomas Coke, letter to the New York Conference, dated Jan. 6, 1806. For reprint see W. L. Duren, *Francis Asbury, Founder of American Methodism*, pp. 256ff.
128. George Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, II, 306, as quoted by J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, p. 284; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 90, 91, 92.
129. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, p. 313.
130. *Ibid.*, p. 323.
131. *Ibid.*, pp. 339f.
132. J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
133. *The Arminian Magazine* (1792), as quoted by J. Crowther, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
134. W. T. A. Barber, in *A New History of Methodism*, W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and G. Eayrs, Eds., II, 293; T. Watson Smith, *History of the Methodist Church within the Territories Embraced in the Late Conference of Eastern British America . . .* (Halifax, N. S.: Methodist Book Room, 1877), pp. 148f.
135. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, III, 389.
136. For an extensive account of the undertaking of the mission, the departure from Portsmouth, and the circumstances of the death and burial, see J. W. Etheridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 378ff.
137. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, IV, 505; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 452.
138. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 19, 20, 33, 34.
139. *Journals of the General Conference* (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855, Carlton and Porter, 1856), I, 11. Henceforth these Journals will be referred to as "G. C. Journals."
140. George G. Smith, Jr., *History of Methodism in Georgia and Florida from 1785 to 1865* (Macon: J. W. Burke and Co., 1877), p. 41.
141. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 274.
142. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 29f.
143. J. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
144. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 251f.; Henry Boehm, *Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical, of Sixty-four Years in the Ministry* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1865), p. 302. The captain's full name was Daniel Dorsey. The Conference session of 1812 also was held in his granary, or "store-house," a "venerable building."—*Ibid.*, p. 403.
145. David Dailey, *Experience and Ministerial Labors of Rev. Thomas Smith*, compiled from his papers, George Peck, Ed. (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1848), pp. 116f.
146. George Coles, *The Supernumerary, or Lights and Shadows of the Itinerary . . .*,

compiled from papers of the Rev. Elijah Woolsey (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1845), pp. 86, 92.

147. J. Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
148. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 132.
149. W. W. Sweet, *Methodism in American History*, p. 229.
150. William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, I, 30.
151. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
152. *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 51, 52.
153. *Reports of Cases Determined in the General Court of Virginia from 1730 to 1740 and from 1768 to 1772*. Jefferson's argument in the case referred to is reprinted in Thomas Jefferson, *op. cit.*, II, 16ff.; William Watters, *A Short Account of the Christian Experience, and Ministerial Labours, of William Watters*, p. 3.
154. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 129; Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790*, pp. 168ff.
155. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 133f.; *The Arminian Magazine*, XI (September, 1788), 486.
156. W. W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, p. 242.
157. *Ibid.*, pp. 387, 471, 502, 568, 643.
158. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
159. T. Coke, *Extracts of the Journals . . .*, p. 94.
160. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
161. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 244; G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 32.
162. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 34.
163. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
164. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
165. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 41ff.
166. *Ibid.*, pp. 54f.
167. *Ibid.*, pp. 57f.; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 144f., 179, 184.
168. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 451.
169. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 94f.
170. *Ibid.*, p. 151; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 211, 183.
171. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
172. G. A. Phœbus, *Beams of Light on Early Methodism in America*, compiled from papers of Ezekiel Cooper, pp. 46f.
173. Ezekiel Cooper, quoted by G. A. Phœbus, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
174. G. A. Phœbus, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 78.
175. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 62.
176. Cf. John Lednum, *A History of the Rise of Methodism in America . . .*, pp. 416f.
177. E. Cooper, *Diary*, quoted by G. A. Phœbus, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
178. J. Lednum, *op. cit.*, pp. 417ff.
179. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
180. *Ibid.*
181. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, II, 332.
182. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 42ff.
183. D. Daily, *op. cit.*, pp. 98, 108.
184. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 308, 309, 312.
185. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 160.
186. Jesse Lee, *Journal*, in Minton Thrift, *Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee, with Extracts from His Journals* (New York: Bangs and Mason, 1823), p. 323.
187. Jesse Lee, *A Short History . . .*, p. 265.
188. *Ibid.*, pp. 265f.; G. C. Journals, I, 33, 36f.
189. John Wesley, *Letters*, VII, 339.
190. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, IV, 502; see also *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 145f.; W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, 92-101; W. Phœbus, Ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 41, 42ff., 101f.; S. B. Bradley, *The Life of Bishop Richard Whatcoat* (Louisville: Pentecostal Publishing Co., 1936), 166f. Whatcoat kept a "Journal" during his ministry in America—

brief, laconic, fragmentary notes—a portion of which is in the Library of Congress, and a part in the library of Garrett Biblical Institute. An excerpt (Aug. 1, 1789–Dec. 31, 1790), accompanied by a brief biographical sketch, may be found in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783–1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, ch. V.

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218. G. A. Phœbus, compiler, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

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288. H. M. DuBose, *op. cit.*, p. 444; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 159; John Scripps, art., *Western Christian Advocate*, VII (1842), 145 (Dec. 30).
289. *G. C. Journals*, I, 108f.
290. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 343, 346; *Journal of the Ohio Conference*, 1812, in W. W. Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days Along the Ohio*, pp. 99f., 110f., 172.
291. *Ibid.*, pp. 229f., 346, 347f.
292. P. Cartwright, *op. cit.*, pp. 126, 127.
293. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 294f., 343.
294. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 295, 343; D. R. McAnally, *op. cit.*, pp. 186ff.; Louis A. Houck, *History of Missouri . . .* (Chicago: Donnelley and Sons, 1908), III, 150.
295. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, I, 417ff.; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 346, 348.

296. Membership totaled 256,881, with some nine hundred Traveling Preachers.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 346ff.
297. First *Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Cist, 1785), p. 3.
298. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 127.
299. T. Ware, *op. cit.*, pp. 130f.
300. T. B. Neely, *A History of the Origin and Development of the Governing Conference in Methodism . . .* (Seventh Ed. Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1892), p. 291.
301. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 323.
302. Wesley's letter of Sept. 10, 1784, to Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury, "and our brethren in North America," in *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 21f.; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 178f.
303. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 149, 151; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 59, 66; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, ch. XIV.
304. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 177.
305. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 178. No official Minutes of the 1792 General Conference exist. Lee supplies the most complete summary of proceedings (pp. 176-193). Thomas Ware's account (*op. cit.*, pp. 219-222) is also valuable.
306. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 178f.; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 344ff.; T. Ware, *op. cit.*, pp. 220f.; A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, III, 16ff.; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 258ff. James R. Williams says that dissatisfaction with the action of the General Conference was widespread among "the local preachers and the people."—*History of the Methodist Protestant Church* (Baltimore: Book Committee of the Methodist Protestant Church, 1843), pp. 62f.
307. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 203f., 213; Edward J. Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform . . .* (Board of Publication of the Methodist Protestant Church, 1899), I, 450. The *Gen'l Minutes* report "Members in Society [white]" in 1790-91, 63,269; in 1791-92, 52,109; in 1792-93, 51,416; I, 43, 47, 52. Not all who withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church affiliated with the O'Kelly movement.
308. G. C. *Journals*, I, 135-41; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 333f.
309. William McKendree, letter to Francis Asbury, Oct. 8, 1811, quoted by R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 260f.; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, p. 332.
310. For Conference boundaries as determined by the General Conference of 1796, see *Minutes*, appended to the *Discipline*, Ninth Ed. (Philadelphia: 1797), p. 61; G. C. *Journals*, I, 10, 56.
311. J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, ch. XVIII; A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, IV, 439ff.; E. K. Nottingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 125, 134ff.

III

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2. Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, IV, *The Great Century . . .*, 69.
3. Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895* (London: Henry Frowde, 1899), II, 14ff.
4. Charles Hole, *The Early History of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East to the End of A.D., 1814* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1896), pp. 36ff.
5. *The New York Missionary Magazine and Repository of Religious Intelligence*, I, (1800), 5ff.
6. Oliver W. Elsbee, *The Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America, 1790-1815*, p. 51; *The New York Missionary Magazine . . .*, I (1800), 161ff., 262ff., 365ff.
7. *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, James Cogswell et al, Eds., I (1800), 1 (July), 13f.
8. Letter from the Committee of Missions of the General Assembly of the Presby-

terian Church, Ashbel Green, Chairman, April 21, 1804, in the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, II, (June, 1804), 13.

9. Extracts from the Minutes of the Synod of Pittsburgh, first annual meeting, September, 1802, in *The New York Missionary Magazine* . . . , IV (February, 1803), 75f.

10. O. W. Elsbee, *op. cit.*, pp. 77ff.

11. "Constitution of the Brethren," Harvard-Andover Theological Library ms., Art. 2, as quoted by Clarence P. Shedd, *Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements* (New York: Association Press, 1934), p. 52.

12. C. P. Shedd, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* . . . (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1842), pp. 25f.

13. Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labours of the Rev. Adoniram Judson* (Boston: Phillips, Samson, 1853), I, 192.

14. K. S. Latourette, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

15. G. C. Journals, I, 234.

16. Francis Asbury, *Journal*, I, 487; Jesse Lee, *A Short History* . . . , p. 94n.

17. Holland N. McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, p. 353.

18. Abel Stevens, *Supplementary History of American Methodism* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1899), p. 174.

19. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 25; John Lednum, *The History of the Rise of Methodism in America*, p. 326.

20. T. Watson Smith, *History of the Methodist Church . . . of Eastern British America* . . . , I, 83.

21. Matthew Richey, *A Memoir of . . . William Black* . . . , pp. 4, 7, 10, 18ff. The *Memoir* contains extracts from the *Journal* of William Black. See also G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 283ff.

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23. M. Richey, *op. cit.*, pp. 98f.; T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 125ff., 144f.; William Black, *The Life of Mr. William Black*, written by himself, in Thomas Jackson, Ed., *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, III, 163, 118ff. For account of the part of Henry Alline, the New Light evangelist, in the awakening among the Methodists, and of Black's contacts with him, see Maurice W. Armstrong, *The Great Awakening in Nova Scotia, 1776-1809* (Hartford: American Society of Church History, 1948), pp. 75ff., 82ff.

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27. T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 146.

28. Thomas Coke, *Extracts of the Journals* . . . , p. 52.

29. S. Drew, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

30. Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 219.

31. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 294.

32. M. Richey, *op. cit.*, pp. 163f.; T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 181. Cf. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 25.

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43. Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .*, II, 82f.
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46. T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 208.
47. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 297.
48. T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 345.
49. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 42, 141.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
51. M. Richey, *op. cit.*, p. 268. See also Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
52. T. W. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 250ff.; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, pp. 143, 161; G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 95, 282f., 297. On his outgoing journey to Liberia, the vessel on which Melville B. Cox was a passenger was moored for a month (February, 1833) off Sierra Leone. Here Cox wrote *Sketches of West Africa*, in which he tells of the state of the mission at that time.—Gershom F. Cox, *Remains of Melville B. Cox* (New York: Mason and Lane, 1840), pp. 172ff.
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54. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 306.
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56. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
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59. George M. Wrong, art., *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, V, 150.
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61. B. Hawley, art., *The Christian Advocate*, LXIII (1888), 15 (April 12), 240.
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63. G. Bryce, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
64. J. E. Sanderson, *The First Century of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1908), I, 24ff.; N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 122n.
65. Thomas Webster, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada* (Hamilton: 1870), pp. 35ff.
66. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 33, 34.
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77. George Coles, Comp., *The Supernumerary; or Lights and Shadows of Itinerancy* . . . , p. 28.
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80. *Ibid.*, pp. 32f.
81. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 70f.; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
82. N. Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 74; Abel Stevens, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs*, pp. 74ff.
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84. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 362f.
85. J. Carroll, *op. cit.*, I, 20.
86. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
87. G. M. Wrong, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 232; W. Stewart Wallace, *The United Empire Loyalists . . .* (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Co., 1914), p. 50.
89. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 95.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
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93. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 99f.
94. A. Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .*, III, 482f.; *Idem*, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs*, pp. 80f.
95. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 98, 101, 104, 106.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
97. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 166.
98. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
99. *Ibid.*, pp. 82f., 82n.
100. O. W. Elsbee, *op. cit.*, p. 33; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 86f.; William Case, "Journal," ms. The portion of the Journal from which this quotation, and others in this volume, are taken—so far as can be ascertained, the only part of the Journal now extant—covers the period April 6, 1808–Aug. 26, 1809. A transcript copy is in the Burton Historical Collection, Public Library, Detroit, Michigan. The Journal was unknown to John Carroll (*Case and His Contemporaries*, p. 9).
101. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 133, 141.
102. *Ibid.*, pp. 174, 187.
103. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 181f.
104. *Ibid.*, p. 182f.
105. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 188, 187.
106. *Ibid.*, 183, 187, 188; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 291.
107. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 367.
108. Appeal quoted by G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 377.
109. David S. Muzzey, *An American History* (New York: Ginn, 1917), p. 219.
110. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 355f. n.
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112. F. W. Conable, *History of the Genesee Annual Conference . . .*, p. 54; Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 390.
113. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 109f.; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 348.
114. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 137f.
115. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 260.
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117. J. E. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, I, 76f.
118. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, IV, 24.
119. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 144ff.; J. E. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, I, 78f.
120. *G. C. Journals*, I, 152.
121. *Minutes of the [British] Methodist Conferences*, IV, 422.
122. Quoted by J. Carroll in *Case and His Contemporaries*, II, 25, from a letter written by John Bass Strong, of the British group.
123. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 151f., 158; A. Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episco-*

pal Church . . . , IV, 278; Mrs. F. C. Stephenson, *One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions, 1824-1924* . . . , p. 49.

124. T. Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 128ff., 158ff.

125. Nathaniel Reeder was appointed to "Ottawha" in 1815; John Dempster to the St. Lawrence Circuit in 1816; and Isaac Puffer to the Augusta Circuit in 1817.—*Gen'l Minutes*, I, 265, 287, 302.

126. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 383f. For the complete letter see T. Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 136f.

127. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

128. *G. C. Journals*, I, 179, 180.

129. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 384. Cf. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

130. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 112f.; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

131. T. Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

132. *G. C. Journals*, I, 213ff.

133. T. Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 130, 158ff.

134. *G. C. Journals*, I, 215.

135. *Ibid.*, p. 227; *Life of the Rev. John Emory* . . . by his eldest son (New York: George Lane, 1841), pp. 93f.; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

136. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, I, 385.

137. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 337, 352f.

138. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 115ff., 118ff.; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 179ff.

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141. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 126ff.; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 186ff.; T. Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 147ff.

142. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 189; G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 388f.

143. J. E. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, I, 117.

144. J. E. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, I, 121; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 202f.

145. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

146. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 373, 384.

147. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 194; *The Methodist Magazine*, V (May, 1822), 193ff.

148. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 373.

149. *The Methodist Magazine*, V (May, 1822), 194, 195; *G. C. Journals*, I, 214.

150. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 234f.; T. Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 186f.

151. *G. C. Journals*, I, 302; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 235f.

152. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

153. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 447.

154. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

155. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

156. *G. C. Journals*, I, 338; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 315ff.

157. T. Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 220; G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 320ff.

158. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

159. G. Coles, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

160. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, pp. 96, 98.

161. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 37.

162. Henry Smith, *Recollections and Reflections of an Old Itinerant*, p. 37.

163. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, II, 81. Cf. Jesse Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

164. For example: John Stewart, *Highways and Hedges* . . . , pp. 53f., 61.

165. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 112.

166. Abel Stevens, *Memorials of Methodism*, Second Series, *Memorials of the Early Progress of Methodism in the Eastern States* (Boston: Peirce and Co., 1852), p. 160.

167. G. F. Playter, *op. cit.*, pp. 77f.

168. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 119.

169. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
170. *Ibid.*, p. 151.
171. George Peck, *Early Methodism . . .*, p. 234.
172. *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, Eds. (London: 1911), II, 197ff. "Act for the promoting and propagating of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England, July 27, 1649." T. Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 39; Joseph Pilmoor, ms. "Journal," p. 247.
173. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 372.
174. Edmund A. De Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger*, chs. VI-XXI. J. E. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, pp. 78f., 94 *et seq.*
175. O. W. Elsbree, *op. cit.*, pp. 82f.; Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 402, 498.
176. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
177. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 49.
178. Jonathan Crowther, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, L.L.D.*, p. 293. Cf. Asbury's statement under date of April 26, 1791: ". . . the Doctor and myself both preached. I had some conversation with the chiefs of the Indians about keeping up the school we have been endeavoring to establish among them."—*Op. cit.*, II, 112.
179. T. Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
180. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
181. Mrs. Frederick C. Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
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183. *Journal of the Ohio Conference, 1819*, in William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days Along the Ohio*, p. 176.
184. *The Panoplist, or the Christian's Armory*, II (1806-07), 5 (October), 231; *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine United*, I (1808-09), 9 (February), 427f.
185. James B. Finley, *History of the Wyandott Mission . . .* (Cincinnati: Wright and Swormstedt, 1840), p. 76.
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188. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
189. *Ibid.*, pp. 25f.; *Idem, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 80ff. Cf. *First Annual Report of the Missionary Society (1819-20)*, ms. unpag. From this point on these reports will be referred to as "Ann. Rep., M.S."
190. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 81f.
191. *Ibid.*, p. 94; *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1832), 1 (Aug. 31), 3.
192. N. Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions . . .*, pp. 26f.
193. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
194. The constitution as adopted at this meeting, later revised, appears in the unpag. manuscript *Minutes of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, April 5, 1819-April 16, 1828, in the archives of the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, Division of Foreign Missions, 150 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. Hereafter in this volume these *Minutes* will be referred to as "Minutes, B.M." See also N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, p. 27. Bangs' version has some minor differences.
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196. *Minutes, B. M.*, I, ms. unpag. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 31.
197. *First Ann. Rep., M. S. (1819-20)*, ms. unpag.
198. *Minutes B. M.*, I, ms. unpag.
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200. *Ibid.*
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203. *G. C. Journals*, I, 186.
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IV

GROWTH AND MISSIONARY EXPANSION IN THE
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16. John G. Jones, *A Complete History of Methodism . . . the Mississippi Conference*, II, 123.

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128. James Phelan, *History of Tennessee; The Making of a State* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1889), pp. 225ff.; Edwin P. Conklin, "The Churches," ch. L in *Tennessee, A History 1673-1932*, Philip M. Hamer, Ed. (New York: American Historical Society, Inc., 1933), II, 805f.
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150. A. D. Field, *op. cit.*, pp. 197ff.
151. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 230.
152. Stephen N. Fellows, *History of the Upper Iowa Conference* (Published by the Semi-Centennial Commission, 1907), pp. 10f.; Edmund H. Waring, *History of the Iowa Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . .* (Oskaloosa, Iowa: n.d.), pp. 15f.; J. Leaton, *op. cit.*, pp. 392f.
153. S. N. Fellows, *op. cit.*, p. 12; E. H. Waring, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

154. The original subscription paper is in the Historical Library of the University of Iowa, Iowa City.
155. J. M. Jamison, quoted by E. H. Waring, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
156. *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 507f.; E. H. Waring, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 123f. Total membership, as given by Waring, was 5,504, slightly in excess of that stated by the *General Minutes*.
157. Edward J. Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform . . .*, II, 259ff.
158. James R. Williams, *History of the Methodist Protestant Church*, p. 402.
159. E. J. Drinkhouse, *op. cit.*, II, p. 3.
160. The "Address," in full, may be found in Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William McKendree*, I, 399, 401f.
161. E. J. Drinkhouse, *op. cit.*, II, 3; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, p. 369.
162. *G. C. Journals*, I, 205, 211f., 213, 218, 221, 223, 232, 236f.; E. J. Drinkhouse, *op. cit.*, II, 5ff. Soule's letter, addressed to Bishops George and Roberts, in which he states that, in view of the act of the General Conference which he conceived to violate the constitution of the Church, he could not "enter upon the work of an itinerant General Superintendent," may be found in full in Tigert (*op. cit.*, p. 340). Although he took a prominent part in the proceedings relative to the election of Presiding Elders, which he favored, Nathan Bangs makes no mention of the General Conference action, nor of Soule's election and resignation, in his *History*. On the first ballot for Bishop, by which Soule was elected, receiving 47 votes, Bangs received 38.
163. Allen Wiley, art., *Western Christian Advocate*, 1845-46, reprinted in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXIII, 278ff.
164. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, II, 33; E. J. Drinkhouse, *op. cit.*, II, 51f.; A. Brunson, *op. cit.*, I, 328ff., 364f.
165. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 458; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 368ff.
166. *G. C. Journals*, I, 270, 276, 277, 278f., 281; J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 385ff.
167. J. J. Tigert, *op. cit.*, pp. 385.
168. *G. C. Journals*, I, 297. But on this action see McKendree's interpretation of its meaning: R. Paine, *op. cit.*, II, 118.
169. *G. C. Journals*, I, 297; P. G. Mode, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*, pp. 128f.
170. The "Circular" may be found in full in N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 264ff.
171. *G. C. Journals*, I, 285f.
172. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 527, 559; *G. C. Journals*, I, 322, 325, 326f., 328.
173. *G. C. Journals*, I, 332, 335.
174. *Ibid.*, pp. 329f.; W. W. Sweet, *Methodism in American History*, p. 182.
175. *G. C. Journals*, I, 328ff.; P. G. Mode, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
176. *Seventh Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1825-26), p. 45.
177. *The Journals of the Illinois Conference* in W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, 331f.
178. A. D. Field, *op. cit.*, p. 35; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 128.
179. W. W. Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana*, pp. 56f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 174f., 233.
180. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 360f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 400.
181. J. N. Fradenburgh, *op. cit.*, I, 818; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 473.
182. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 343; *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 30.
183. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 384f.
184. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 18, 19.
185. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 371, 372, 469f., 574; II, 28; E. F. Newell, *Life and Observations of Rev. E. F. Newell . . .* (Worcester: C. W. Ainsworth, 1847), p. 218.
186. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 460, 556, 557; G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 228; N. Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions . . .*, p. 239. Bangs states that the Tallahassee Mission was begun in 1825 by John Slade, but the *General Minutes* indicate that Slade was appointed to the mission in 1826, not 1825.

187. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 220ff.; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 412, 430.
188. G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 223f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 412, 430, 459.
189. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 452, 481; A. H. Redford, *Western Cavaliers*, p. 38. Cf. W. B. Posey, *The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest, 1783-1824* (Tuskaloosa: Weatherford Printing Co., 1833), pp. 84f.
190. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 83, 126; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, p. 235; *Twelfth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1830-31), p. 9; *Thirteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1831-32), p. 8.
191. N. B. Griffith, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VI (1832), 35 (April 27), 138; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 127; *Thirteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1831-32), p. 9.
192. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 290f.
193. S. R. Beggs, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
194. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 172; *Fourteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1833-34), p. 9.
195. James Watts, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1834), 22 (Jan. 24), 86; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 313.
196. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 220, 230; letters, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1833), 17 (Dec. 20), 66, and VIII (1834), 37 (May 9), 146.
197. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 128; letter, William Royal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VI (1832), 46 (July 13), 182.
198. D. M'N, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VI (1831), 7 (Oct. 14), 26.
199. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 7, 128, 296; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, pp. 233f.; letter, Carlisle Babbitt, missionary, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, IX (1835), 26 (Feb. 20), 102; G. G. Smith, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 337; *Thirteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1831-32), p. 9.
200. A. H. Redford, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
201. *Nineteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1837-38), p. 15.
202. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 416; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, p. 230; also *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 239; *Fifth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1823-24), p. 4.
203. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 101; I, 394; N. Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions* . . . , p. 232; S. A. Seaman, *op. cit.*, pp. 264f.
204. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 466; N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 305ff.; Jonathan Greenleaf, *History of the Churches of . . . New York* (New York: E. French, 1846), p. 302; S. A. Seaman, *op. cit.*, pp. 243f.
205. James E. Armstrong, *History of the Old Baltimore Conference* . . . , p. 280; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 376.
206. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 254, 622; John Lednum, *Rise of Methodism in America*, p. 432.
207. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 28; James Mudge, *History of New England Conference*, pp. 77, 322.
208. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 295; R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 218.
209. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, III, 295; R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 219; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 172.
210. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 26, 28, 31.
211. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences; from 1773 to 1813, inclusive* (New York: Hitt and Ware, 1813), I, 67f. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, I, 261.
212. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 159, 160.
213. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, II, 338.
214. Jesse Lee, *A Short History* . . . , p. 270.
215. *Twenty-third Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1841-42), p. 31.
216. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 18; Albert Shipp, *History of Methodism in South Carolina* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), pp. 449f.; W. M. Wightman, Ed., *Life of William Capers* . . . , pp. 291ff., 297, 343f. Cf. Gross Alexander, *History of the Methodist Church, South* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1849), pp. 115ff. For particulars concerning John Honour and his work see W. P. Harrison, Comp. and Ed., *The Gospel Among the Slaves* . . . (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1893), pp. 155ff.
217. *Nineteenth Ann. Rep.*, M. S. (1837-38), p. 19. Some discrepancy exists between the Reports of the Missionary Society and the *General Minutes* as to the number of missions.

218. *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), p. 71; Jesse Sinclair, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1832), 1 (Aug. 31), 2; W. P. Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 173, 203, 211, 220, 233, 238.
219. James Gwin, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1834), 35 (April 25), 138.
220. W. P. Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 162. Details on the activities of missionaries to the slaves in particular missions are given in chs. XII, XIII. Additional details in "Notes" by some of the missionaries are supplied in ch. XIV.
221. W. W. Robinson, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, IX (1835), 40 (May 29), 158.
222. N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 64f.
223. William Goodell, *The American Slave Code in Theory and Practice . . .* (New York: American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1853), pp. 326ff.
224. F. J. Turner, *The United States, 1830-50*, p. 167.
225. P. S. Graves, letter, *Eighth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1826-27), p. 40.
226. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 524; W. Goodell, *op. cit.*, pp. 336f.
227. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1840-41), pp. 19f.; editorial, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1833), 5 (Sept. 27), 19.
228. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 572; III, 603; Kenneth S. Latourette, *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, IV, *The Great Century . . .*, 332.
229. *Third Ann. Rep. of the M. S. S. C. Conf.*, in the *Fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* 1823-24), p. 41.
230. S. A. Seaman, *op. cit.*, pp. 399f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 335.
231. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 374f.
232. John Emory, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1833), 17 (Dec. 20), 66.
233. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 537, 540, 629; III, 48.
234. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1840-41), p. 17; N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, IV, 286f.
235. *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 576; J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 465f.
236. Francis Asbury, *op. cit.*, I, 512; II, 199; III, 261ff., 391f. Asbury used the terms "German" and "Dutch" as synonymous.
237. R. Paine, *op. cit.*, I, 302ff.
238. Gottfried Duden, *Bericht über eine Reise Nach den Westlichen Staaten Nord-amerikas* (Eberfeld: 1829).
239. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 356.
240. *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), p. 14; Paul F. Douglass, *The Story of German Methodism, Biography of an Immigrant Soul* (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1839), p. 23.
241. Adam Miller, *Origin and Progress of German Missions in the Methodist Episcopal Church, including an Account of the Christian Experience of Some of the Converts from Popery and Infidelity as Furnished by Themselves* (Cincinnati: Wright and Swormstedt, 1843), p. 22. This book constitutes the most valuable single primary source extant on the beginnings of the German Methodist work in America and the religious experiences of German Methodist leaders.
242. P. F. Douglass, *op. cit.*, pp. 23f.
243. The *General Minutes* read "missionary to Germans in the Columbus District and vicinity" (II, 421), but his labors were not restricted to the one District.
244. William Nast, letter quoted in A. Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 32f.
245. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 499; *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), pp. 14f.; P. F. Douglass, *op. cit.*, pp. 26ff. *The Annual Reports of the Missionary Society*, beginning with that for 1841-42, supply considerable firsthand information on the origin and progress of the German Missions, furnished by William Nast and Adam Miller.
246. A. Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 35f.
247. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 585.
248. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1840-41), pp. 16f.

249. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 643, 646; *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), pp. 15f.; *Twenty-fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1842-43), p. 18; *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), p. 37.
250. *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), pp. 20f.; *Twenty-fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1842-43), p. 19; *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), p. 44; *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 105, 291, 292.
251. *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 338; *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), p. 23; *Twenty-fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1842-43), pp. 22f.; *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), pp. 50f.; *Minutes, B. M.* IV, 157, 171ff.
252. *Twenty-fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1842-43), p. 21; *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), pp. 47f.; *Gen'l Minutes*, III, 423f., 549.
253. *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1841-42), p. 19; *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), pp. 38, 45.
254. *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1843-44), p. 40.
255. *G. C. Journals*, II, 55, 56.
256. *Twenty-sixth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1844-45), pp. 47 *et. seq.* P. F. Douglass, *op. cit.*, pp. 71f.

V

MISSIONARY ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM, 1820-44

1. 2 Tim. I., 11-12, The New Testament, a New Translation, by James Moffatt.
2. *Fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1822-23), pp. 35f., "Constitution of the Missionary Society . . .," Art. 1.
3. *Seventh Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1825-26), p. 50, "Constitution . . .," Art. 13, as amended by the General Conference of 1824.
4. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
5. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 466.
6. *Minutes, B. M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
7. *Journal of the Eighth Ohio Annual Conference*, in William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days Along the Ohio*, pp. 176f.
8. *Fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1822-23), p. 15.
9. John B. M'Ferrin, *History of Methodism in Tennessee*, III, 182f.
10. *Fifth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1823-24), pp. 29f.
11. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
12. *Fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1822-23), p. 4.
13. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 336.
14. Nathan Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, III, 181f.
15. *Fourth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1822-23), p. 38.
16. *Minutes, B. M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
17. *Ibid.*, II, 280f.
18. *Ibid.*, III, 124.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
21. *Ibid.*, IV, 317ff.
22. *Tenth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1828-29), p. 35, "Constitution . . .," Art. 3, as revised.
23. Nathan Bangs, *An Authentic History of the Missions . . .*, p. 28.
24. J. M. Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 19, 28.
25. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
26. *Tenth Ann. Rep., M. S.* (1828-29), p. 35, "Constitution . . .," Art. 7, as revised.
27. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
28. *Ibid.*, II, 228, 230.

29. *Ibid.*, IV, 21.
30. *Ibid.*, V, 23.
31. William C. Smith, *Pillars in the Temple* . . . , pp. 101-04, 106.
32. J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered* . . . , pp. 544f.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 556f.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 562f.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 524f.
36. *The Christian Advocate*, LI (1876), 38 (Sept. 21), 299.
37. *Minutes, B.M.*, III, 113.
38. W. C. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 230ff.
39. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 394.
40. *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, Eds. (New York: Appleton, 1888), V, 212.
41. *Fifty-first Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1868-69), p. 169.
42. *Christian Advocate and Journal*, LXIV (1869), 43 (Oct. 28), 340.
43. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
44. Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . , I, 3.
45. *First Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1819-20), unpagcd ms.
46. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
47. George F. Playter, *History of Methodism in Canada*, p. 225.
48. *Fifth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1823-24), p. 8.
49. J. M. Reid, *op. cit.*, I, 101f.
50. *Fifth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1823-24), p. 8.
51. *Eighth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1826-27), p. 10.
52. J. B. M'Ferrin, *op. cit.*, III, 182.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 332.
54. *Journals of the Illinois Conference in William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, IV, *The Methodists*, 289.
55. R. N. Price, *Holston Methodism*, III, 258.
56. *Journal of the First Annual Session of the Indiana Conference*, in William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana*, pp. 105f.
57. A. H. Redford, *Western Cavaliers*, pp. 122ff.
58. *Minutes of the First Twenty Sessions of the Erie Annual Conference* . . . , p. 4.
59. John G. Jones, *Complete History . . . Mississippi Conference* . . . , II, 388.
60. *Ninth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1827-28), p. 20.
61. *Minutes, B.M.*, III, 275f.
62. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1840-41), p. 29.
63. "Financial Report of the Board of Managers, M.S., to the General Conference" (1824), unpagcd ms.
64. *Minutes, B.M.*, II, 48.
65. *Tenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1828-29), p. 11.
66. *Fourth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1822-23), p. 13.
67. *Minutes, B.M.*, I, unpagcd ms.
68. *Eleventh Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1829-30), p. 12.
69. J. B. M'Ferrin, *op. cit.*, III, 224f.
70. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 488, 521.
71. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 121.
72. *Eighth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1826-27), p. 18. The spelling "Lambeth" is incorrect. The *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 521, have the same error.
73. *Minutes, B.M.*, II, 71f.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
75. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 296, 312.
76. *Seventeenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1835-36), p. 6.
77. *Eighteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1836-37), p. 20.
78. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 389.

79. *Nineteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1837-38), p. 2.
80. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1840-41), p. 7.
81. *Minutes, B.M., III*, 255.
82. *Ibid., IV*, 193.
83. *Twenty-third Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1841-42), p. 41, 84.
84. *Minutes, B.M., IV*, 55.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
86. *Twenty-fourth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1842-43), pp. 43f.
87. *Minutes, B.M., II*, 288.
88. *Ibid., III*, 1.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
90. *Ibid., IV*, 59f.
91. *Twenty-fifth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1843-44), p. 85.
92. *Sixteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1834-35), pp. 2f.
93. Macum Phelan, *History of Early Methodism in Texas, 1817-1866*, p. 154.
94. W. W. Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana*, p. 118.
95. Treasurer's Report, *Fifteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1833-34), pp. 27, 40.
96. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
97. Treasurer's Report, *Sixteenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1834-35), p. 26.
98. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 81.
99. Joseph Hill, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VI (1831), 2 (Sept. 9), 6.
100. *Gen'l Minutes*, II, 173.
101. Peter Cartwright, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VIII (1833), 17 (Dec. 20), 66.
102. *Minutes, B.M., I*, unpagcd ms., "Constitution . . .," Art. 1.
103. James O. Andrew, letter to William Capers, reprinted from the *Christian Repository* in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1832), 18 (Dec. 28), 71.
104. Joshua Soule, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1833), 27 (March 1), 106.
105. Joseph Hillman, *History of Methodism in Troy, New York*, p. 57; *Gen'l Minutes*, II, pp. 206ff.
106. J. G. Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 353, 376.
107. *Minutes, B.M., III*, 212.
108. N. Bangs, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, IV, 234f.
109. *The Methodist Magazine*, VII (September, 1824), 349.
110. *Minutes, B.M., I*, unpagcd ms.
111. *Ibid.*, March 23, 1825.
112. *Ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1825.
113. *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1827.
114. Abel Stevens, *Supplementary History of American Methodism*, p. 175.
115. *Seventeenth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1835-36), p. 19.
116. *Minutes, B.M., II*, 188.
117. *Ibid.*, III, 47.
118. *Twentieth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1838-39), p. 15.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
120. A. Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
121. *Minutes, B.M., III*, 12.
122. *Ibid.*, IV, 305.
123. Melville B. Cox, letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1833), 4 (July 12), 183.
124. *Minutes, B.M., II*, 188.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
126. *Twentieth Ann. Rep., M.S.* (1838-39), p. 22.
127. Report of Board of Managers meeting of Nov. 21, 1832, in *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII (1832), 14 (Nov. 30), 54.
128. *Minutes, B.M., II*, 205f.

129. *Ibid.*, IV, 312.
130. *Fifteenth Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1833-34), p. 20.
131. *Minutes*, B.M., II, 206f.
132. *Ibid.*, pp. 209f.
133. *Seventeenth Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1835-36), p. 5.
134. *G. C. Journals*, I, 453ff.
135. Abel Stevens, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs*, pp. 13f.
136. *G. C. Journals*, I, 478.
137. *Eighteenth Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1836-37), p. 5.
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139. *Minutes*, B.M., III, 267, 318f.
140. *Ibid.*, 226f.
141. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1840-41), p. 6.
142. J. M. Reid, *op. cit.*, I, 31.
143. Jacob Young, *Autobiography of a Pioneer . . .*, pp. 369ff.
144. *Third Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1821-22), unpagcd ms.
145. *Minutes*, B.M., I, unpagcd ms.
146. William McKendree, letter, quoted by Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William M'Kendree*, II, 57.
147. N. Bangs, *op. cit.*, III, 384.
148. Stephen Olin, *The Life and Letters of Stephen Olin, D.D., LL.D. . . .*, I, 174.
149. *Minutes*, B.M., III, 27f.
150. A. H. Redford, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
151. Report of the Committee on Missions, May 12, 1832, in *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VI (1832), 42 (June 15), 166.
152. *Minutes*, B.M., II, 141f.
153. *Fourteenth Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1832-33), p. 16.
154. *Twenty-second Ann. Rep.*, M.S. (1840-41), p. 4.
155. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, XXVI, 692f.
156. William Stevenson, *Autobiography*, *New Orleans Christian Advocate*, March 5-April 24, 1858. See William L. Duren, *The Trail of the Circuit Rider*, pp. 165ff. See also Homer S. Thrall, *Methodism in Texas* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1894), p. 20.
157. *Gen'l Minutes*, I, 298.
158. M. Phelan, *op. cit.*, pp. 12ff.
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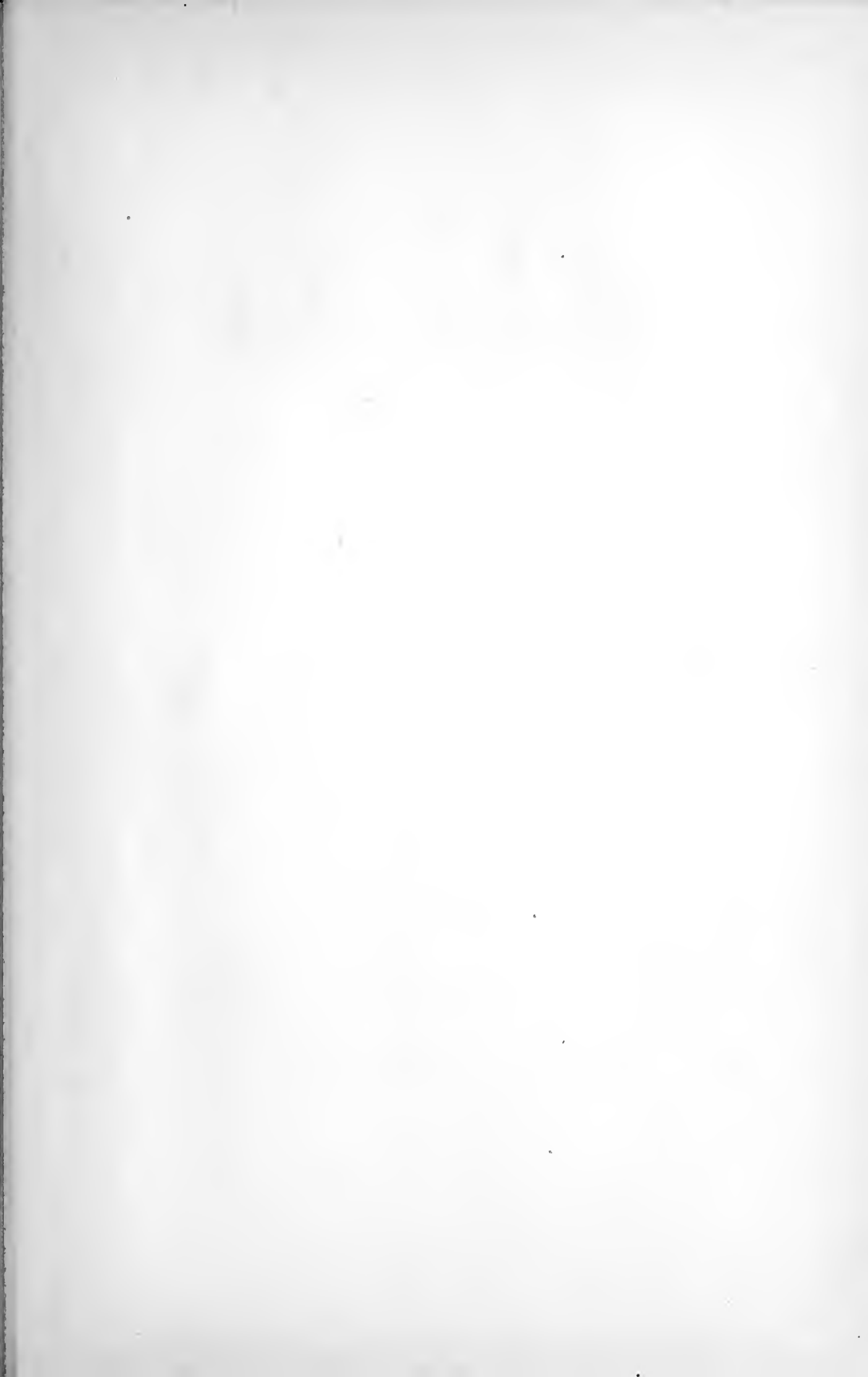
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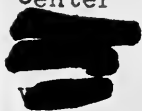
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